

THE
B R A C E L E T:
OR, THE
FORTUNATE DISCOVERY.
BEING THE
H I S T O R Y
O F
Miss P O L L Y * * * * *.

Translated, with some Alterations, from a French
Work, entitled, *MEMOIRES DE CECILE.*

I N T W O V O L U M E S.

V O L. II.

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CRICKETSON.
GARLOCK.
THE
FORTUNATE DISCOVERY,

 N the preceding Volume, as the Reader may remember, I left Sir *Thomas* kneeling at my Feet. I am extremely sorry, said he, for every thing that has happened; but depend upon this, that, unless you now give attention to what I am saying, you are absolutely ruined. You have inspired me with the most violent Passion I ever felt in my Life. I endeavoured to make it

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agreeable

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agreeable to you by Offers, which would have had some Weight with any one else but yourself. As long as I thought that your Heart was wholly disengaged, your Indifference made little Impression on me; but I must own, that I was piqued to the last degree, when I heard that you encouraged the Addresses of my younger Brother; and that it was in pursuance of his Advice, you refused the Proposals which I had before flattered myself with the Hopes of your accepting. This, my dear *Polly*, (for notwithstanding your Aversion you are still dear to me) is the Cause of all that Treatment which you think you have a right to complain of; but surely the Violence of my Love, and the Torments I have endured, ought to be sufficient Excuses for the Measures I have taken; nor can you be ignorant

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ignorant that they were the Effects of those all-powerful Motives. I did consent indeed to your retiring into the Country, but it was only in Appearance that I consented ; and the only Reason why I undertook that my Equipage should convey you thither, was, that I might have this Opportunity of speaking to you ; and I was willing that *Duncombe* should accompany you, in order to prevent your having any Suspicion of my Design. I could easily have sent her back again, under pretence that I would set you down myself at the Place where you was going to ; and indeed I was in some hopes of deceiving you myself, by driving you back to *London* to a Lodging that I had got ready for you ; and to which Place I have taken care that all your Cloaths and Goods should be sent ; so that they are

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not gone forward to *Becconsfield* as you imagined. I was just setting out from *Uxbridge* to wait for you here, when word was brought me that you had changed your Carriage, and had hired a *Chaise*. I need not tell you the Effect that this Information produced. You in a manner forced me to use Violence, which I never so much as thought of, much less deliberately designed to put in practice: and now, my dear *Polly*, the only thing to be considered is, how this unlucky Affair may be made up. Notwithstanding all that I could say to the Officer that commanded the Party of Soldiers that you met with, he cannot help thinking that you are either run away, or have been taken by force from your Friends. He says, he will take care of you; and perhaps he will put you in

some

some Place of Confinement till he is fully informed of the Particulars of your Story. Put me in some Place of Confinement, Sir! said I, why, what have I done to deserve it? Pray let me go on, said Sir *Thomas*, without Interruption. I tell you, it is in your own Power to avoid any such Disgrace; and for that Purpose you need only tell the Captain, that the Reasons of your crying out proceeded from your not knowing me at first, and taking me for a Highwayman; but that at present you are very willing to entrust yourself to my Discretion. It is from our agreeing together alone, that you can be safe from further Harm. Consider this, and resolve how you will behave in this Matter. Unless you give these People immediate Proofs of our being upon good Terms, it will be in all Probability

out of my Power to hinder you from going to Gaol.

He waited with great Impatience for a Reply, which the Concern and the Confusion that I was in, prevented me from giving so soon as he could have wished. He was just going to press me further upon the Subject, when the Captain of the Guards came in upon us, without giving us any previous Notice. He desired Sir *Thomas* very civilly to withdraw, and told him at the same time, that it was proper he should discourse with me in his Turn. Sir *Thomas* was a good deal surprised at this Request, and told me, in a very threatening manner, as he was going out, to take care what I said. The Captain then shut the Door, and ordered one of his Soldiers to stand without, and take care that no one listened.

I was a good deal frightened at first at the Thoughts of undergoing an Examination from a Man of so terrible an Aspect. My Tears, which flowed plentifully down my Cheeks, seemed to affect him, notwithstanding the Sternness which he had put on at his coming in. Do not be under any concern, Madam, at what has happened, said he. If the Account that one of my Soldiers has been giving me is true, you have not the least reason to be under any Apprehensions, since I will take care to secure you from the Insults with which you are threatened ; but I should be glad if you would tell me whether the Person that stopped your Chaise is really Sir *Thomas Drake* ; and if it is true that he is in love with you. Alas, Sir, said I, (being comforted a little by the mild manner in which he spoke

to me, and feeling an Indignation against Sir *Thomas* that cannot be expressed) it is but too true that Sir *Thomas Drake* is the Person that stopped the Chaise, in which I was going to a Lady's House at *Becconsfield*; but as for what he has told you of being my Lover, for Heaven's Sake, Sir, I beseech you not to believe what he says. It is true indeed that ever since the Death of Colonel *Grimstone* he has been continually tormenting me; and it was in order to avoid being teized by him any longer, that I had taken a Resolution to retire into the Country, whither I was now going, and of the Truth of which I have now got Credentials about me. I then shewed him Mr. *Perry's* Letter to Mr. *Hampden*, which I told him he was welcome to open and read. I also gave him an Account of what had happened

at

at *Uxbridge*; of the Fright I had been in on seeing Sir *Thomas* there, and of the Measures I had taken in order to conceal my Departure from him, by making use of a Chaise that was going to *Wickham*.

The Captain, after having heard every thing that I had to say, replied, I perceive plainly, Madam, that you have told me the Truth; and that Sir *Thomas* is very blameable, and has imposed on me in this Affair. The Account I received from the Postilion, whom I met on the Road, of your having been attacked, agrees perfectly with what you have been saying. He gave me a Bundle, which he said belonged to you, and which had been left in the Post-Chaise. One of my Men has it in his Custody; and I will take care it shall be restored to you. I have sent an Express to *Uxbridge*,

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to bring hither the Woman and the Coach that were left there ; and with respect to Sir *Thomas*, you shall be amply revenged on him ; he shall not get off easily, I promise him. This Threat made me tremble. I threw myself on my Knees, and intreated the Captain that he would not hurt Sir *Thomas*. I told him, that I should never be able to forgive myself if any Harm happened to him ; that I should be extremely well satisfied if he would permit me to be escorted to *Becconsfield* by some of his Men, and offered to go on foot if he would give me Leave. He told me that it was now too late in the Evening to think of doing any such thing ; and that therefore I must be content to lay at the Inn that Night ; that he would send up the Landlady's Daughter to keep me Company, and to get me

what I wanted. He desired, that I would not give myself the least Uneasiness; for that Sir *Thomas* should be kept under a strong Guard till the Morrow; that, with respect to the Punishment he so fully deserved, he was willing, upon my Entreaty, to remit it; but that however it was highly proper, that he should continue for some time under the Dread of it, and should know, that it was thro' my means at last that he was extricated from an Affair, which might otherwise have been attended with very dangerous Consequences. He desired, that he might keep the Letter I had put into his Hands, assuring me, that he would not open it, and that he would give it me again before I went away. He then called up the Girl he had before spoken of, and ordered her not to leave me, but

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to provide me with every Thing I might want.

I pass over the minute Description of that Evening's Transactions, which, notwithstanding my Companion's Assiduity, appeared to me to be excessively tedious. I was in too violent an Agitation to be able to take much Rest; so that I would not go into Bed. I spent above four Hours in relating to the Girl the several Particulars of my Story, and endeavouring to convince her of my Innocence, which Sir *Thomas* had most unjustly and cruelly aspersed. She informed me in her Turn, that Sir *Thomas* had a Guard set over him, and that his Servants were confined.

About the Middle of the Night we heard a Coach stop at the Door. I did not doubt in the least but that it was Sir

Thomas's, and that Mrs. Duncombe was in it. Soon after the Soldier that had accompanied her, and who was the Man whom I had first made acquainted with my Story, conducted her to the Room in which I was. Marks of the utmost Astonishment appeared very visibly in her Countenance; her Grief and Tears were sufficient Proofs to me of the Integrity of her Behaviour. As the Soldier had had strict Orders not to mention a Syllable to her of what had happened, she was entirely ignorant of what had befallen me; though her own Imagination suggested to her every thing that was horrible and disastrous. She found herself disturbed just as she had got into Bed; was obliged to get into the Coach at that time of Night, without knowing whither she was going; and last of all, she now found me in a

House

House to which she was wholly a Stranger. She intreated me, in the most suppliant and tender Manner, to clear up this Matter ; not so much for the sake of satisfying her Curiosity, as to relieve her from the Anxiety and Uneasiness which she laboured under. I was so affected by the Air of Truth, Innocence and Tenderness, that accompanied her Words, that my Tears prevented me from making any Reply. I then let her into the whole of what had happened, in Presence of the Soldier who had been an Eye-witness of Part of it, and who excused himself for not having said any thing to her before concerning this Affair, on account of the strict Charge he had received to the contrary, and confirmed great Part of the Truth of what I had been saying ; to which she made no other Reply than

by

by Sighs. The Captain came and surprised us at this Interview, and examined Mrs. *Duncombe* before me, who confirmed the Account that I had given him before ; and assured him, that Sir *Thomas* had never entrusted her with the Knowledge of his Designs. He asked, whether she would witness this, if she were brought face to face with Sir *Thomas* ? She assured him, that she would. He then advised her to stay in the Room with me, and endeavour to prevail on me to take some rest till Day-light. He then returned to the Apartment in which Sir *Thomas* was confined. She then pressed me to lay down on the Bed, to which I having consented, she sat by me ; and thus we spent the Remainder of that tedious Night. Mrs. *Duncombe* was giving me continual Proofs of her Tenderness and Concern for me ; which

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which

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which had this good Effect at least, that it restored me in some measure to my former Tranquility.

As soon as the Captain was informed that I was up and ready to see him, he brought Sir *Thomas* to me, who appeared so much embarrassed and out of Countenance, that I really could not help pitying him. I would have thrown myself on my Knees to have begged Pardon for having been the innocent Cause of all that had happened, but the Captain prevented me, and said, that it was by no means my Business to make Excuses to one who had used me so unjustly. He desired me to be silent, and then made Mrs. *Duncombe* repeat the Declaration that she had before made; which redoubled Sir *Thomas*'s Confusion. Well, Madam, said he, the Tears streaming down

from

from his Eyes, you were determined to ruin me, and you have at length succeeded in your Design. I was so affected myself with the Situation I saw him in, that I was unable to reply. The Captain upon this interposed, and said, The Lady, Sir, has great reason to complain of your Behaviour, which has been altogether unworthy a Man of your Rank and Fortune. Had it not been for her Interposition in your Behalf, you should have been exposed in the manner you deserve. She desired as a great Favour that I would pass it over in silence; I have not been able to refuse her this Request. Render yourself worthy of this Indulgence, by behaving for the future in a manner suitable to your Situation; and then addressing himself to me, he gave me the Letter I had put into his Hands,

and

and said, that we might set out for *Becconsfield* whenever we pleased; and that he would escort us thither himself. As for you, Sir *Thomas*, continued he, you must stay here till I come back. Sir *Thomas* then desired Leave to speak to me for a little while before Mrs. *Duncombe*; upon which, the Captain went out of the Room, and left us alone.

Scarce did Sir *Thomas* find that the Captain was gone, than affecting an Air of the utmost Tranquility, and trying to put on a gay and easy Look, The Jest, said he, has been carried a good deal farther than I intended it should. My Intentions were not such as you imagined they were; and you would have thanked me some Time or other for this silly Step that you was going to take; but your extreme Youth did not permit you to see

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in a true Light the Advantages I would have procured for you ; and this I am assured of, that, in the melancholy Retirement whither you are now going, you will sadly repent of not having taken my Advice. As to myself, I am not greatly concerned at what has happened, since it has been a means of discovering the Goodness of your Heart. I hope you will act suitably to it for the future, and that you will conceal all past Transactions from those whom there is not the least Occasion that they should be made acquainted with them. You know very well the Persons I am speaking of, my Wife and Brother---they stand in no need of any such Information ; and depend upon it, you will forfeit my Esteem if ever you give it them. I assured him in return, that I should never disclose

what

what had happened to any one. It is enough, continued he, my dear *Polly*, I am satisfied. To-morrow your Goods and Cloaths shall be sent you; and, if you recollect that you want any Thing else either for your Convenience or Amusement in the Place to which you are going, my Purse and every thing that I have is at your Service. I thanked him for his Offer. He then approached me with an Air of great Timidity and Confusion. We must part, my dear *Polly*, perhaps for ever. He was unable to say any more by reason of his Tears, nor indeed could I make him any Reply. We parted at length; and the Captain proposed Mrs. *Duncombe* setting out with me immediately. He thought it proper to go with us himself as far as the Town, and then left us, for fear his escorting us might

might give any Suspicion of what had happened. I would fain have given the two Soldiers he had brought along with him a Guinea; but the Captain told me, that if any Acknowledgment was to be made, Sir *Thomas* was the proper Person to make it; that as to himself, he had been sufficiently recompensed by the Pleasure he felt in serving me: and thus ended this disastrous Adventure, which had it not been for the Interposition of the Captain, might have been productive of very fatal Consequences to myself.

Our Arrival at Mrs. *Hampden*'s spread great Joy over the whole Family. I was told, that I had been expected the Evening before; and that they were greatly afraid that some Accident had befallen me in the Way. Mrs. *Hampden* said the same; and I perceived, by the obliging

Manner

Manner in which I was received by her, that she paid a great Deference to Mr. *Perry's* Recommendation. I gave her the Letter that he had given me for her; but she would not read it before me, al- ledging, that I needed no other Recom- mendation to her Favour, than myself. Soon after Mrs. *Duncombe* and I took a tender Leave of each other.

As my Goods were not yet come down, Mrs *Hampden* was so obliging as to put up a Bed for me in her own Apart- ment, and kindly introduced me to a young Lady that had been with her some Time. This is a Circumstance that I ought by no means to omit, since the Friendship of that Lady contributed a good deal to the future Happiness of my Life. I hope the Reader will indulge me in drawing a kind of Portrait of her,

just

just as I found her at the Time when I first experienced her Tenderness and Affection for me.

She was called Miss *Fanny*; and tho' then thirty-two Years of Age, a Circumstance that I was afterwards made acquainted with, yet she seemed to be much younger. She had a fine Shape, the most delicate Complexion that I ever beheld; her Features of the utmost Regularity; and Eyes which seemed formed for nothing but Expression. Her Appearance and Address made me instantly look her as my Friend; and the Sequel will prove that I had no reason to repent of the Choice I had made. The Goodness of her Heart, the Incocence of her Life, and the Discretion and Sagacity, with which she gave me Advice, are Qualities that are deeply imprinted on my Mind,

and

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and as they deserve my Gratitude, so they shall not fail of my Veneration and Respect. In short, the Person I have just been describing, went beyond the Commission that had been given her of being barely courteous to me ; and it was not long before I was informed by Mrs *Hampden*, that she was a Lady of some Family and Fortune ; and that it was through an Excess of Humility she had chosen that Place of Retirement. What confirmed me the more in my good Opinion of Miss *Fanny*, was her Earnestness to be of use to me in an Accident which befel me soon after my coming to *Becconsfield*. Either the Fear that I had been continually oppressed with during the last Adventure, or the Greatness of my Fatigue, threw me into a little Disorder which I was unwilling to complain

complain of; and the Arrival of my Goods that Day, put me into a still greater Hurry of Spirits; insomuch that in the Night I was very feverish, and my Disorder increasing in a few Days, I was thought to be in a great deal of Danger.

During this Illness, which lasted for some time, Miss *Fanny* gave up her whole time to my Service. She would sit up with me every Night; and it was with much Difficulty she was persuaded to go to Bed in the Day-time. As I would not take any thing but what was given me by her, her Rest was very frequently broke in upon; and it was on this Occasion, that Mrs. *Hampden* gave me the abovementioned Account of Miss *Fanny*, in order to induce me to spare her so frequent Attendance. The Information that was then given me concerning

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her, rendered her so dear, and at the same time so respectable to me, that I did not dare to ask for any thing more from her: when that excellent Lady seemed greatly affected at the Reserve I had put on. She accordingly mentioned it to me, and became more assiduous than ever in getting me every Thing that I wanted.

I had been ill a Fortnight, four Days of which I had been in a good deal of Danger, by reason of the Frequency and Severity of the Fits, which were accompanied with strong Deliriums.

I was just come out of one of these, when I beheld Mr. *Perry* by my Bedside. Mrs. *Hampden* had wrote him an Account of my Situation, and he had taken the Trouble to come and see me. He brought with him an Apothecary, to whom,

whom, I imagine, I was indebted for the Recovery of my Health, since he gave me such effectual Remedies, that the Relapse which was expected became less violent that Night ; and on the Morrow I had not the least Return of my Fever. As he was in the utmost Hurry to be gone, he left his Orders with Miss *Fanny*, who executed them with such Skill and Judgment, that in a few Days the only Remains of my Distemper were an extreme Weakness.

As soon as I was upon the Recovery, I perceived that the Bracelet, which I had wore on my Arm ever since the Colonel's Death, was no longer there, and was afraid I had lost it. Miss *Fanny* came in just as I was deplored my Misfortune ; from whom I would fain have concealed the Reason of my Concern ; but she

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seemed so affected with my Grief, that I could not help owning to her what was the real Motive. My dear Friend, said she, do not concern yourself any more; I am the Person that took off your Bracelet while you was sick; I will restore it to you immediately; and indeed I do not doubt, continued she, fighing very deeply, but that it contains a Picture which ought to be very valuable to you. A Picture! replied I. There is no Picture; it is only a Cypher. I beg your Pardon, Miss, said she, with a Confusion which I could not help taking notice of, I thought that the Bracelet contained a Picture. Indeed, Miss, if it does I know nothing of the Matter, said I. She went and fetched it immediately; but gave it me in so embarrassed and confused a Manner, that it appeared to me she had

a great mind that I should make her a Present of it. She told me at the same time that Mr. *Perry* had given her a Box for me ; but that she had staid till I was well enough before she put it into my Hands. I bethought myself immediately that I should find somewhat in that Box that would be more proper to present her with than the Bracelet I was so reluctant to part from. I desired her therefore to go and fetch the Box, which I opened before her, and left her to choose whatever she pleased for herself, intreating only as a Favour that she would permit me to keep my Bracelet.

Miss *Fanny* shewed a great deal of Concern at the Opinion I had entertained of her ; insomuch that she sighed and wept so bitterly that I was greatly concerned for her ; which immediately led

me to ask her Pardon in the most tender Manner for what I had done ; and she soon passed it over.

This Matter being fully made up, she then resumed the Subject of the Bracelet again. I would lay a good Wager, said she, that there is a Picture within ; and if there is one in it, with your Leave, I will find it out in a Moment. I consented, assuring her all the while that she was mistaken ; however I was very much surprised when after having seemingly taken much Trouble to look for it, she at length opened it, and displayed to my Sight a Picture in Miniature. She examined it attentively herself ; and then looking at me just as she was putting it into my Hands, I saw the Tears stand in her Eyes ; but I was too eager to examine

~~the Picture, and did not see the
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the Lineaments of the Picture, to think of any thing else at that Time.

Although it represented a Person somewhat older than myself, scarce had I looked on it, when I imagined that it was my own Picture in the Dress of a young Officer. The Surprize that this threw me into, had like to have occasioned a Return of my Distemper; and, indeed, had it not been for Miss *Fanny's* Assistance, I should have sunk under it; but her Care and Tenderness soon brought me to myself again. I then said to her, with my natural Simplicity, Indeed my Dear, I did not know there was any Picture, nor had I any Intention of deceiving you in the least; nay more, I do not so much as know for whom the Picture was intended, unless indeed, Colonel *Grimstone* out of a Jest designed

it for me. I do not know, said Miss *Fanny*, with a good deal of Confusion; but do not you think it likely that it is your Father's Picture? You know certainly whether it is or no. I was going to acquaint her that I had never known any Father, had not I been prevented by my Tears. She perceived my Concern, and would not ask me any more Questions on so tender a Subject; but left me, in order, as she said, to get me a Draught that I was to take, and left me quite melted at the Discovery of a Picture, the Original of which I despaired ever of seeing.

Alas! said I to myself, this young Lady has guessed but too well whose Picture it is. This Bracelet, if I may believe the Colonel, was found upon me at the time that he saved me from the

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Destruction to which my Parents had exposed me. O my Father ! said I, embracing the Picture, I am doomed only to caress your Shadow. I shall never have the Pleasure of calling you my Father, nor you the Satisfaction of owning me for your Daughter. Then reflecting on what had happened, I felt no small Confusion from this Discovery's having been made to Miss *Fanny*.

I forgot to acquaint my Readers before that I had been placed at Mrs. *Hampden's*, as a young Lady of Family, who having lost my Parents, had fallen under the Care and Protection of Lady *Drake*: I imagined to myself, how much the Surprise that I had shewn at the Sight of the Picture, and the free Declaration I had made of not knowing whose it was, would give room to Miss *Fanny* to sus-

pect some unfavourable Circumstances, and excite her Curiosity to find them out. She will not fail, said I, asking me Questions, and I shall be greatly at a loss to know what Answers to make her ; for I shall be equally embarrassed to find out a probable Excuse for my Ignorance, as I shall be to endeavour to deceive a Person that is so dear to me.

She surprized me in the Midst of these Reflections. I took the Draught that she brought me without asking any Questions, expecting she would renew the Conversation about the Bracelet ; but as I was casting my Eye fearfully upon her, being astonished at her Silence, I beheld so settled a Melancholy on her Countenance, that I was on the Point of discovering the several Particulars that I knew with relation to my Birth. I had got the

little

little Box close to me, and took out and put in several Things, without knowing what I was about. Miss *Fanny* still continued silent. I was persuaded that she attributed my not saying any thing to my distrusting her, and that was the Cause of the Concern which she shewed. I at last concluded, that it was in my Power to dissipate it ; and this Method was so simple, that I was astonished that the Expedient had not been suggested to me before.

My dear Sister, said I, (for thus I frequently called her) you seem very much concerned, and I am persuaded that the Reason of it proceeds from your Suspicion of my having deceived you in relation to the Picture ; but I beg you will believe me, when I assure you, that I was wholly ignorant that the Bracelet contained so

valuable a Treasure. I lost my Parents at an Age in which I was incapable of receiving Instruction; and had it not been for you, I should never have imagined, that it was my Father's Picture, though indeed I have not now the least Doubt about it. But, alas, this Expedient failed: *Fanny* seemed as melancholy as before; though she forced herself in a manner to conceal ~~it~~ by an Overflow of Tenderness.

We should have spent the whole Day in this Manner, if the Report of my being better had not induced Mrs. *Hampden* to come and pay me a Visit. That worthy Lady, after having assured me of the Uneasiness that she had felt on my Account, gave me a Couple of Letters which had come during my Illness, but which she had hitherto kept, as I was not

not in a Situation to read them. She told me it was her usual Custom to open such Letters as came to the Ladies under her Care ; but that she thought it proper to give me Notice before she had put it in practice with respect to me ; and that when I had read them, I might impart the Contents to her if I thought proper ; that this Time, indeed, she did not pretend to lay me under a Restriction of which I was wholly ignorant : she then took her Leave.

Her Discourse had given me some little Uneasiness. I did not doubt in the least, but that one of the Letters came from young Mr. *Drake* ; and I should have been excessively chagrined that Mrs. *Hampden* should have known any thing of the Matter. I opened them immediately, and found that I was not mistaken.

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That from Mr. Drake was such a one as I could have wished ; and moreover I observed that in his Expressions there was something that bespoke the Man more than usual. He made many sensible Reflections on the Necessity we were each of us under to submit to the Authority of those on whom we depended ; and I flattered myself, that the Passion which he still entertained for me, contributed a good deal to the Advances which both Reason and Virtue had made in his Mind. He informed me that his Relations were more pressing than ever for him to set out on his Travels ; that he had at first shewn a great Reluctance to the complying with their Request ; but that since he had received my Letter, he had not presumed to withstand their Commands any longer. He assured me, that my Advice

vice would have been sufficient of itself to induce him to obey his Father; and begged that I would not accompany it any more with Threatenings, of which the very reading made him tremble. He then told me he was to be absent for three Years; and however irksome that tedious Time might prove to him, nothing should prevent his complying, in Obedience to my Commands, upon condition that I would promise a Continuance of my Affection, and frequent Letters. Mrs. Fletcher wrote a Postscript, in which she thanked me for the Compliments I had paid her in my last. What she said with respect to Mr. Drake was as follows.

“ I have as yet been a Mother to him, and can therefore assure you, with the more Certainty of his Sincerity. I see

from the Letter that you wrote to him much better than from all the Descriptions he has been able to give me, how much you deserve that he should be sincere. I am persuaded that he can never be happy without you ; and therefore should be extremely sorry if his Friends thought of engaging him elsewhere. I am in hopes that he will be grateful, and of finding a Friend in you, as you seem to promise in your last ; and that when I shall become an Eye-witness of your common Happiness, I may be permitted in some measure to partake of it."

I am at a loss to determine whether I was most affected by Mr. *Drake's* Letter or Mrs. *Fletcher's* Postscript. I looked upon her from that instant as our Patroness. The Consent that she gave to our mutual Affection made it appear to me in

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so favourable a Light, that I did not make the least Scruple of giving way to it. I thought there was no one ought to take more Concern in Mr. *Drake's* Honour and Happiness, than the Person he had long considered as his Mother; and indeed I looked upon her Authority and Advice as what we were both of us equally obliged to pay some Deference to.

The other Letter, which came from my Lady, though it had been filled with Reproaches, would have had very little Effect upon me; insomuch that it would have scarce interrupted that Satisfaction which had been given me by the other: but it was in reality full of those Compliments which Numbers of People find a great Facility in paying, though it would be with the utmost Difficulty in the

World

World that they could be brought to feel a tenth of what they profess to do.

She congratulated me on having had the Resolution to retire ; and told me, that as this was the only Situation proper for me, so it was more especially to be chosen before any other ; that neither my Birth nor my Fortune entitled me to any Condition of Life which might gratify my Vanity ; she added, that she was greatly surprised at my not having mentioned a single Word of Mr. *Drake* throughout my whole Letter, being apprehensive at first that he would be offended at this Neglect ; but that she had been mistaken : and withal assured me, that this Indifference on my Side seemed to be very agreeable to him. Here I could not help smiling at this Piece of Dissimulation. She concluded with a De-

fire that I would not put myself to any Inconvenience to write to her. This last Article, by which I was freed from being obliged to return her any Answer, was by much the most acceptable to me.

I had just made an end of reading these Letters when *Fanny* came into the Room. I immediately locked up Mr. *Drake's* Letter in my little Box, and desired her to put my Lady's upon the Table. She took it with an Air of great Timidity and Confusion; and stopping at my Bedside, asked me, whether I had not received another Letter beside that? This Question embarrassed me a good deal; however I recollect~~ed~~ myself, and replied, that it came from a Friend, and that there was something in it which I chose should be kept a Secret. She said nothing to this; but I heard her sigh as

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She put the Letter on the Table. I was affected with it, insomuch that I was very near discovering the true Situation of my Mind. It was not any Suspicion that prevented me; but the Respect which I had both for the Person and Character of that amiable young Lady. I endeavoured to divert her from thinking on the Subject, by repeated Assurances of the Tenderness and Esteem which I felt for her; and she seemed sensible enough of it to be composed and quieted on that Head.

I got up that Day for the first Time, and every Day after I found myself growing stronger. In a little while after I thought myself sufficiently recovered to write to Mr. *Drake*; but I was in a good deal of Distress to know whom to ask to direct it, and how it could be sent to the Post with-

out

out Mrs *Hampden's* knowing any thing of the Matter. Its being directed to Mrs. *Fletcher*, would, I knew, be a Means of preventing Suspicion; yet I thought her Curiosity might be excited to look into it, on account of the Letters which I had received. I did not dare then to write with this Uncertainty on my Mind; 'till at length a lucky Accident supplied me with an Expedient which I should have thought almost impossible to have come in my Way.

The Daughter of the Landlord of the Inn where I had been carried by the Party of Horse, and who had sat up with me there the greater Part of the Night, had been often at Mrs. *Hampden's*, to enquire after my Health. The Time of her coming was most usually on *Sundays*. I knew nothing of it for some time. Once

however

however I happened to be at the Door when she came, not being well enough to go to Church with the rest of the Family. I desired her to walk into the Par-lour ; and must own, to my Shame, that while others were addressing their Prayers to Heaven, I was employed in gaining this Girl to my Interest. It happened well enough for me, that she had received an Education much superior to most Girls of her Birth ; she could write I found tolerably well. I caressed her a good deal; insomuch that she promised to do me all the Service that lay in her Power. She was to come the next *Sunday*, and I took care to have my Letter ready against the Time. I took the Opportunity of *Fanny's* Absence to write it, at several Times; and looked upon it as a great Happiness,

that

that I was so well able to conceal it from her

I informed Mr. *Drake* in this Letter of every Thing that had happened to me since my Departure from *London*, except indeed the Violence that had been offered me; for as to that, I had given Sir *Thomas* my Word that I would never mention it; and indeed I was apprehensive, that my telling it, would put the young Gentleman into such a Rage against his Brother, that it might be productive of fatal Consequences to them both. I made an Excuse for not having answered him sooner by reason of my Illness; advised him by all means to comply with the Injunctions of his Parents; desired him to be constant; and concluded with giving him Instructions how he should direct to the Girl; by whose

Means

Means for the future our Correspondence was to be carried on. My Confidante kept her Word in coming to me on the following *Sunday*, and took my Letter, I having previously directed it to Mrs. *Fletcher*.

It is necessary to be of the Age I then was, in order to form a true Notion of the Innocence and Integrity of my Heart. But this is not all; it is necessary to be in love, in order to have an Idea of the Satisfaction that I felt at the Success of this little Scheme. I was convinced, that I was now entirely safe from all Apprehensions of any Discovery; and this Conviction contributed not a little to the speedy Recovery of my Health.

About three Days after I had sent this Letter, Mr. *Drake's* Impatience at not having heard from me, and his Apprehensions

hensions that I had relapsed into my former Distemper, had like to have thrown my Affairs into Confusion ; but *Fanny's* Discretion saved me, and I got off with the Shame only of a Discovery to her ; a Shame which rendered her from that Time the Confidant of our mutual Affections.

The first Letter that Mr. *Drake* had wrote came whilst I was ill ; and which was not given me till twelve Days after it had been in the House. It was more than that before I was able to return any Answer ; and Mr. *Drake* being uneasy and surprised at not having heard from me, wrote a second before he received mine, in which I had informed him of Mrs. *Hampden's* Custom of opening all Letters that came to her Boarders, as also

of the Person to whom he might direct his Letters for the future.

I saw *Fanny* come into my Room with a Letter opened in her Hand. My dear Miss, said she, Mrs. *Hampden* has just received this Letter for you; you know the Rule of the House, and will not therefore be surprised at its having been broke open. Heavens! said I, as soon as I looked at the Hand-writing, has Mrs. *Hampden* read it? Do not be frightened, said *Fanny*. I happened to be with Mrs. *Hampden* when the Letter was brought in; she was luckily very busy, and as she knows the Greatness of my Affection for you, she bid me read it and give her an Account of the Contents. I have done, my dear *Polly* (forgive me the Familiarity of the Expression) I have done for you what I would not have done for

for myself; disguised from her a Truth, the Discovery of which would not have turned out to your Credit. Oh my Dear, said I, embracing her, how infinitely am I obliged to you! I do excuse you for your having called me your dear *Polly*; and you must be pleased to account me ever such. My Heart was never better gratified than with so tender an Appellation; and I cannot henceforward excuse a Discontinuance of it. Alas, my dear *Polly*, said she, since you insist upon my calling you so, you will find somewhat more affecting and tender in the Letter that I have brought you; however---No indeed said I, interrupting her, your Friendship shall be ever as valuable to me as Mr. *Drake's*. Ah, if you did but know him, you would love him as tenderly as I do. Miss *Fanny* upon this melted into Tears;

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I embraced her with a Tenderness which I thought she so well deserved at a Time in which she was giving me such evident Proofs both of Mr. *Drake's* Constancy and of her own Affection. She withdrew herself from my Arms, and said in a melancholy Tone of Voice, Read then this Letter; but I entreat it as a Favour that you will not return any Answer till I have had some farther Discourse with you. She then took her Leave without giving me time to reply.

I was so eager to know the Contents of the Letter, that I did not stay long to consider what Motives Miss *Fanny* might have for making that Request. As soon as she left the Room I read Mr. *Drake's* Letter; his Uneasiness was set forth in such lively Colours, and he expressed himself in so tender and affectionate a manner,

manner, that indeed it would have been impossible for me to have concealed it any longer from Miss *Fanny* had I been ever so desirous. He made continual Repetitions and Assurances of his Sincerity and Constancy; and that not so much that he thought I stood in need of being convinced, as because he felt new Pleasure every time he told it me; and besides, he was persuaded, he said, that I was daily more and more pleased with it. He then informed me that his Father's Recovery was almost compleated; and, which gave me the greatest Uneasiness, that at length he had yielded to the continual Importunity of his Brother, and was determined to set out very soon upon his Travels. That his Brother had obtained the necessary Leave for him to be absent from his Regiment; and that he should set out in

ten or twelve Days at farthest for *Portsmouth*, where he was to take Ship. He acquainted me likewise that *Duncombe* was not to accompany him, but that a new Preceptor had been appointed for him; he begged of me to return him an immediate Answer; and promised that I should hear from him before his Departure; as likewise that he would write whensoever he had any Opportunity abroad. He concluded, by assuring me of his Sincerity; and that notwithstanding he was obliged to submit to his Friends in some Instances, yet they should never lay the least Restraint upon his Liberty. He farther desired that I would give him the same Assurance, without which, he said, he could never persuade himself to such an Absence.

I was agitated with so many different Emotions on the reading of this Letter, that I did not know what settled Resolution to make. I would fain have wrote an immediate Answer; but Miss *Fanny*, to whom this Letter had discovered the Situation of my Heart, for whom I had a great Regard, and whose Advice I considered as important, had desired me not to return any Answer before she had discoursed with me. I was so impatient to see her, that I went directly into her Apartment to look for her, where I found her thoughtful, and seemingly very melancholy. I discovered that she had been crying, and being concerned at the Sight, desired her with some Emotion to acquaint me with the Cause of her Grief. I thought that I perceived her Concern to have been increased by my Visit and

the Questions that I put to her. I became upon that more uneasy and anxious to know what was the Matter. She endeavoured, but in vain, to conceal from me her Distress ; but as it was too visible in her Countenance to leave any room for Mistake, I still continued pressing her to let me know the Reason. Well then, said she at last, since I have not been able to hide from you my Concern, this is the true Reason ; I love you, my dear *Polly* ; I thought that the Sincerity of my Behaviour towards you would have engaged your Confidence ; and I see from the Letter that I have just put into your Hands, that I have been sadly mistaken. My Sensations are perhaps too delicate and refined ; this however be assured of, that I can never be satisfied with the Half of any one's Affection. Your Liking

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for Mr. *Drake* is not the only Secret that you have kept; you have not told me all you knew with respect to the Picture that was inclosed in the Bracelet. If it is your Father's Picture, that can never be a Matter of Doubt with you; and this you seemed willing to conceal, by pretending to have lost your Parents at an Age in which you was incapable of knowing them. I observed the Confusion you was in; and from thence concluded, that you was endeavouring to impose upon me. I am fully persuaded besides, that the Letter you so carefully concealed from me a few Days ago, came from Mr. *Drake*. Consider, my dear *Polly*, when you are desiring of me a tender Friendship, and without the least Reserve, whether I have Reason to be satisfied with your Behaviour; and then

judge by the Situation in which you have found me, how you have wounded the Delicacy of my Esteem, by the apparent Signs of Distrust which you have so frequently shewn.

I could not hear these Reproaches of Miss *Fanny*'s without being confounded, and in a manner quite sunk down into the Consideration of my own Unhappiness. Oh my dear Miss, said I, I have scarce Strength sufficient to answer you; but be assured, that I never designed to impose upon you. If I have concealed any Particulars from you, my Motive was the Apprehensions I laid under from your Virtue, and not from your Want of Discretion; however, it is impossible to recall the past; for the future you shall be informed of every Thing that passes as well within my own Breast as without;

and

and if you will let me see you in my Room awhile hence, I will give you some Pledges of the Truth of what I have been saying. As it was now Dinner time, we were obliged to defer the Remainder of our Conversation till the appointed Time.

As soon as Miss *Fanny* was at leisure, she came into my Room according to her Promise, but it was with an Air of Comfort and Satisfaction which I had never before beheld in her. I gave her numberless tender Marks of my Esteem; and I had so fully determined to conceal nothing from her, that I was almost as eager to give her an Account of the Particulars of my Birth, Education, and Affection for Mr. *Drake*, as she seemed willing to be entrusted. I opened the little Box, which the Colonel had given

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me, and took from thence the Certificate he had drawn up the Day after his having found me, and brought me to his House, and the Note that had been found on me. Miss *Fanny* read them with a kind of Transport. The Tears trickled down her Cheeks without my perceiving any Signs of Concern in her Countenance. She frequently left off reading to embrace me, and that with a Tenderness, which equally surprized and affected me. I waited with some Impatience to hear what she would say to me ; but finding her to look stedfastly on me for some time, without saying a Word, I imagined that she expected some further Discovery at my Hands ; I therefore immediately told her, That I had nothing more to add to the Account already given with regard to my Birth ; for that

other

other Particulars never came to my Knowledge. However, I informed her of the Instruction that the Colonel had given me while I was under his Care and Inspection, and shewed her the Instrument by which he assigned to me the Money and Goods intended for my Fortune. I then gave her a Recital of every thing that had happened since my Removal from the Colonel's; of the Civilities I had received from Lady *Drake*; my boarding at Mrs. *Moreton's*; and the Quiet that I had there enjoyed till Sir *Thomas's* Return out of the Country; the Misfortune that I lay under of pleasing him; the base Proposals that he had made to me; and of the Arrival of his younger Brother in Town. I related the Particulars of our first Interview; nor did I in the least scruple to describe it in the

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the very Manner in which it had affected me. I told her how my Lady had herself been the Occasion of our conceiving an Esteem for each other; and the Advice that she had given me, in what Manner I might most effectually secure her Brother's Affections. I added to all this, that I had withstood Mr. *Drake's* Efforts with all possible Firmness; and that I had even resisted my own Inclinations as long as I could; but that the Apprehensions I was under, that the young Gentleman's Impetuosity would break through all Bounds, joined to the Hope, that Time would produce an Alteration either in his Sentiments or my Situation, I was prevailed on at length to make him a Declaration of my Affection. But my dear Miss, said I, Mr. *Drake* is so far from losing, that he is continually

getting ground in my Heart ; and that too in proportion as his Understanding increases, and he becomes more capable of judging for himself ; and indeed I must own that these Sentiments have taken such deep Root in me, that it would be impossible to destroy them, without putting an End at the same time to my own Life.

O unhappy *Polly* ! said *Fanny*, what a Source of Evils have you brought upon yourself ! Can Heaven then have designed you should experience the same Distresses with your unfortunate Mother ? For be assured of this, continued she, after hesitating some time, from the Manner in which you was expos'd, you may pretty certainly conclude, that you were the Offspring of a Passion as fatal and as tender as that which you now feel.

feel. Her Tears prevented her from saying any more. I was so affected, that I should perhaps have been prevailed upon to have given over all further Thoughts of my Paffion if I had been the only Person concerned ; but my Struggle was so great between my Tenderness for Miss *Fanny*, and the Apprehensions of Mr. *Drake*'s going away without hearing from me, that I could not help crying out with great Earnestness, But, my Dear, Mr. *Drake* is perhaps just setting out on his Travels ; and if I do not return an immediate Answer, it may perhaps be of fatal Consequence. Well, my dear *Polly*, said she, if you think him as sincere and as virtuous as he ought to be, write to him and entrust me with the Letter ; and Heaven grant that this Paf-
fion may not one Day become the Cause of

many heavy Misfortunes. I could not help owning to her the Measures I had taken with the Innkeeper's Daughter, for the carrying on our Correspondence. She contented herself with a gentle Remonstrance on the Shame and Danger of having such a Confidant; and then left it to my Discretion to make use of her if I thought proper. She assured me, that if I entrusted her, neither my Letters nor Mr. *Drake's* should ever be seen by Mrs. *Hampden*; and that Mr. *Drake's* might be directed to her for the future. I accordingly promised that I would rely entirely upon her. This Conversation lasted so long that it was Supper Time before it ended.

However sensible I might be of this new Proof of Miss *Fanny's* Friendship, which this little Discovery seemed still farther

farther to have increased, my first Care on being left alone, was to write an Answer to Mr. *Drake*, when all the Tenderness that I had felt in the late Conversation seemed to be renewed, and to turn itself in his Favour. In short, this was the most obliging and affectionate Letter that I had ever wrote to him; though I must own the Reflections that Miss *Fanny* had suggested to me put me somewhat on my Guard.

I bewailed his Absence, and yet could not help owning, that it was the most prudent Step he could take. I congratulated myself on the Tenderness of his Affection; but owned at the same time that I feared his Inconstancy. I assured him of my Love; but added withal, that this would be wholly useless, unless the Impediments which now stood in our Way, were entirely

entirely removed. However, I promised that I would never entertain any Sentiments to his Prejudice, or in the Favour of any other ; and that a Life of Retirement should be my only Resource, either if I lost his Affections, or cruel Necessity should forbid our Union. I informed him of Miss *Fanny*'s Friendship ; drew her Character as well as I could ; and intreated him to esteem and confide in her. Lastly, I desired him to direct all his Letters for the future to her, without paying any Regard to the Direction I had before given him.

I finished my Letter that Night, and gave it unsealed to Miss *Fanny*, who made some Scruples to the reading of it ; but I insisted that she should. She was very well satisfied with the Contents, except with that Part of them which related

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to her, and would fain have erased it; but I would not suffer any such Thing, being desirous that Mr. *Drake* should have the same Opinion of her that I had.

My Letter was sealed up and directed to Mrs. *Fletcher* by Miss *Fanny*, with whom I now had not the least Reserve. I had never found myself in so happy a Situation since the Colonel's Death as I now experienced: what I lost in that generous Protector, I found in the sincere Friendship of Miss *Fanny*. My Attachment to her increased to such a Height, that oftentimes upon examining my own Heart, I found my Sentiments for her so lively and tender, that I considered myself almost as being unfaithful to the Colonel's Memory. The Love that I bore Mrs. *Duncombe*, whom I had long been taught to look upon as my

Mother,

Mother, seemed vastly inferior to the Affection with which *Fanny* inspired me. Her Tenderness seemed at least as essential to my Happiness as Mr. *Drake's* was ; and I looked upon the Loss of either as equally pernicious and destructive of my Quiet. *Fanny*, on her Part, made me most grateful Returns, as soon as she perceived herself thoroughly settled in my Esteem ; and, in order to this Purpose, she changed her Apartment, and came into one that was adjoining to mine. From that Time we were scarce ever asunder. She served me with so much Zeal and Attention, and accustomed me so long to see my Wants, and even my very Desires, anticipated by her Readiness to gratify them, that I became insensibly (I must own to my Shame) more difficult to be pleased, and more imperious in my Com-

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Commands, when either through Accident or Weakness she happened to be less punctual than usual. The Pevishness I used to shew at those Times, she bore with so amiable a Humility and Sweetness, that she has oftentimes made me blush at my Conduct ; and which had more Effect upon me than even the Advice of the Colonel, which he used frequently to give me on this Head. As soon as I had recollected myself a little, I did every thing that I could to make her forget it, by my Tenderness and Caresses ; but even then she did not shew on these Occasions that servile Gratitude, which one always sees in little Minds ; but received them with a Kind of Openness and Generosity, which shewed the Nobleness of her Disposition ; and if at times she seemed affected with them, it

was

was not so much on her own Account, as from the Pleasure that she felt at being able to think advantageously of my Behaviour.

I have insensibly entered into an Account of the several Particulars that constituted the Comfort of my Situation at *Becconsfield*, without acquainting my Readers with the Information I had received of Mr. *Drake*'s Departure. I am in hopes, however, that the Motive which induced me to make this Digression, will be a sufficient Apology for it.

I received two Letters from Mr. *Drake* since I had opened myself to *Fanny*, before that came in which I was acquainted with his setting out. The first was conveyed to me by the Innkeeper's Daughter, to whom I took care to intimate (according to *Fanny*'s Desire) that I had no farther Occasion for her Assistance; and

I rewarded her so amply for what she had done already, that she seemed more overjoyed at what she had received than concerned on account that she should not receive any more. Notwithstanding my Impatience to read the Letter, the Pleasure I took in giving *Fanny* a Proof of my Confidence, led me to carry her the Letter sealed up as it was, and to refuse reading it, but in her Presence and under her Inspection. Notwithstanding the several Scruples she at first made to this, I easily perceived that she was much pleased with my Behaviour; and accordingly read the Letter along with me. It contained numberless Assurances of Constancy and Affection, which were described in so lively, and at the same time in so rational a Manner, that *Fanny* seemed to me to approve of it, by the

Air

Air of Satisfaction that appeared in her Countenance. Mr. *Drake* exprefſed himſelf with a good deal of Tenderness on the Uneafiness he had been in to know how I did; nor was he quite ſatisfied at the Time of his Writing, because my Letter was ſhorter than uſual, which left him in Suspence concerning the Certainty of my Recovery.

I was forry it was not in my Power to quiet him on this Subject as ſoon as I could have wifhed; but what gave me moſt Concern, was, to find that he had an imperfect Account from *Duncombe*, to whom his Wife had, no doubt, given the whole Information, of my having been carried off by his Brother, and having ſpent a whole Night with him at an Inn.

He assured me, indeed, that he did not give credit to this Story; and that be-

cause he neither believed his Brother to be capable of any such Violence, or me so cruel as to conceal it from him if it had happened. He told me, that after what *Duncombe* had informed him of my pretended Marriage, he had not the least Confidence in him. He desired it as a Favour, that I would tell him the Truth of a Story which he fancied had been framed on purpose to torment him ; and, above all, begged I would not conceal the true State of my Health, concerning which he was in some Doubt. He concluded with entreating me to let him hear from me very soon ; assuring me, that my Tenderness was equally necessary to his Peace and his Life.

I now found myself in the utmost Dilemma, occasioned by the Indiscretion, or, as I then thought, the Malice of *Duncombe*.

I found that Mr. *Drake* had discovered the whole Adventure ; and did not doubt but it was equally known to his Sister. I imparted my Suspicions to *Fanny* ; and found that that Part of Mr. *Drake's* Letter had made a good deal of Impression on her. The only Thing I had to reproach myself with, was the having concealed it from both. However, I made immediate Reparation to *Fanny*, by acquainting her with all the Particulars of that melancholly Affair ; of the Engagement I had laid myself under to Sir *Thomas* never to mention it, and the very Motive that had induced me to lay myself under such an Engagement ; and I had the Satisfaction to find her quite convinced of my Innocence. She told me, that this Adventure had been talked of, but that no Names had been mentioned.

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The exact Account which I gave her of this Affair seemed to affect her a good deal more than it did myself. What! said she, was you dragged along by brutal Servants, and delivered over to Soldiers, as if you had been a Criminal? What a cruel Disappointment did I meet with? I expected to have found a Comforter in *Fanny*, whereas I was obliged to try to comfort her myself, and to forget for some Time the Share that I bore in that unhappy Transaction; and that at length it had been discovered to Sir *Thomas*'s Brother.

As my Answer could not conveniently be conveyed that Day, I spent the Remainder of it with *Fanny*. She made me frequently repeat the several Circumstances of the Affair, with which she seemed every time to be more and

more

more affected. She commended my Courage and Discretion ; and it was with much Difficulty that I could calm the Transports both of Rage and Tenderness with hich she was at once overwhelmed.

I designed on the Morrow to answer Mr. *Drake's* Letter ; and waited for an Opportunity of consulting with *Fanny* in what manner I should disclose the Affair in which Mr. *Drake* seemed so desirous of being satisfied ; and in the mean time she brought me a second from Mr. *Drake*, which had been directed to her. It was full of Assurances of the Continuance of his Affection, and protested more than ever a Deference for my Authority.

He told me, that it was merely in Compliance with my Injunctions that he had consented to set out upon his Travels ; and that he had even resolved to do

it without taking *London* in his Way. He added, that as he was to stay at *Buckingham* for some time, he should be extremely tempted to come over to me for a Day, desiring only my Consent and Approbation of a Design which was very easy to be put into Execution, especially as he had a Servant that he could depend upon; and as his Tutor was obliged to go to *London* for eight or ten Days upon some Business of his own. He still continued pressing me to give him an Account of my having been carried away; which however he did not thoroughly believe, he said, though his Sister had since told it him. He congratulated me on having acquired so faithful and agreeable a Friend as Miss *Fanny*; commended me to her Care, and promised to make her Satisfaction as far as lay in his Power.

I must own that I gave way to the fond Hope with which Mr. *Drake* flattered me. I had so ardent a Desire to see him; that there was no Method but what I should have approved of to gain that Satisfaction, how short soever it might be. I consulted *Fanny's* Looks, and found that she by no means liked Mr. *Drake's* Design; I therefore did not so much as dare to make her the Proposal. My Dear, said I to her, I find you do not approve of Mr. *Drake's* Intention of paying me a Visit. I do not, replied she; and for this Reason, I think it both rash and hazardous. I do not mean on account of the Length of the Journey, or of the Fatigue which Mr. *Drake* must necessarily sustain; but rather at the Offence that would be taken if Mrs. *Hampden* should know it, and the

Danger that would inevitably follow upon it; for you may depend upon this, that it would never be kept secret; and this would do great Difservice to Mr. *Drake*, as it would prejudice his Relations against him, and draw on you Reproaches, which would be more heavy and bitter than any you have hitherto experienced.

I did not dare to reply to Reasons so convincing; but contented myself with desiring her to assist me in the Detail of the Adventure abovementioned. I could not possibly avoid giving Mr. *Drake* some Account of that Transaction; but then I was willing it should be such that he should not have any room for being angry with his Brother.

I told him then, in pursuance of *Fanny's* Instruction, that an Accident that had happened to the Carriage I went in, prevented

vented my reaching *Becconsfield* the same Day I set out from *London*; and that Sir *Thomas* having heard of it, had given Directions for my Accommodation at an Inn; that it was true indeed that Sir *Thomas* came thither himself, but that Mrs. *Duncombe* had not stirred from me a Moment during the whole time; and that I had only seen his Brother just as I was going away. *Fanny* advised me to add, that Sir *Thomas*'s coming to the Inn was rather an Effect of his Prudence than out of Design to offer any Violence; and that I had all the Reason in the World to be satisfied with his Behaviour; but notwithstanding all that she could urge on this Head, I refused to say any such Thing, being fearful that Mr. *Drake* would suspect I had some blameable Intercourse with his Brother. She found

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me however more tractable with respect to the Design that Mr. *Drake* had to pay me a Visit. I positively forbad his putting his Design into Execution; and for that Purpose, I not only made use of those Reasons which *Fanny* had suggested to me, but also additional ones, enforced by the Authority which he had declared I had over him. As to my Sincerity, Tenderness, and the like, those were Points on which I had full Liberty given me to expatiate. My wise Directress would neither meddle with them, nor lay me under any Restriction. The Letter being finished to the Satisfaction of both Parties, she directed it, and sent it away.

Eight Days after, I received another Letter, with an Account of his Departure. I cannot give my Readers a better Idea of

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the Improvements that had been made in Mr. *Drake's* Understanding, than by transcribing the Letter. The Contents of it were as follows,

My Dearest POLLY,

‘ You quite throw me into Despair, by opposing the Happiness that I had proposed to myself in seeing you. I believe I should never have been able to have quieted my own Mind on that Subject, if the Sagacity of your Advice, and the great Pleasure I take in submitting to every Thing that had the least Appearance of being agreeable to you, had not counterbalanced my own Inclinations. But have you considered, my dear *Polly*, how tedious an Absence I have got to support, and that too in contradiction to my own Inclinations, and the Tenderness of my Heart?

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To

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To be three whole Years without seeing you, without being able to tell you in Person how sincerely I love you, and without having it in my Power to receive the same Assurances from yourself? I am to set out to-morrow, with the cruel Certainty of not seeing you till my Return; and, to counter-balance this Misfortune, which is the greatest that can ever happen to me, the only Consolation I have, is the Pleasure I feel in obeying you. My Sister is to stay here a few Days longer with my Father, and then she will return to *London*. She assures me, however, that she intends to pay you a Visit in her Way thither. She would fain have had me wrote to you, perhaps a more cruel Letter than she extorted from me before, but I excused myself, by saying, that I fancied there was

was no Need of putting you in mind of me. I shall have an Opportunity of hearing from you while I am at *Buckingham* or *Portsmouth*, by reason of my Stay for a little while at each of those Places, and you may depend upon hearing from me whenever it is in my Power. Thinking on you, my dear *Polly*, loving you, and telling you continually so in my Letters, are the only Pleasures that I can promise myself, while I have the Misfortune of being absent from you. Do not be under any Apprehensions that the Trial you have at present put me to of my Obedience, shall ever be attended with even a Wish to recover my Liberty. I have already disposed of that to you, and you may depend upon my never withdrawing it. I shall not mention any more the Adventure on the Road; yet

cannot

cannot help suspecting that you have not acquainted me with the whole. I suppose you were willing to prevent my Resentments taking place; but I am so far from complaining of your Discretion, that I think myself much obliged to you, as it teaches me my Duty. I make it my Business to imitate you as far as I can; may your Tenderness for me, and my Affection for you inspire me with your Virtues, as then I shall have an indisputable Right to your Esteem, and may then hope for a Return of that faithful and constant Affection with which I shall ever be your faithful Lover,

J. DRAKE.

I read this Letter while *Fanny* was in the Room; and of all the Sentiments and Emotions it occasioned, that of Grief for his

his Departure was the only one I could give way to. My Tears interrupted me frequently in the reading it. *Fanny* perceived it, and was much affected herself. Alas! my dear *Fanny*, said I, he is gone; perhaps I shall never see him any more. I had not Strength to proceed, but became almost overwhelmed with Grief. *Fanny* had Prudence enough not to try to oppose it by ill-timed Consolations, but left me to myself for some Time; and then finding me more composed, My dear *Polly*, said she, Mr. *Drake* is undoubtedly deserving of your Esteem. Alas! continued she, I know it but too well, that the most sincere, and tender Hearts are oftentimes the most unhappy; but I can never think, but so pure an Affection will one Day or other contribute to your common Happiness.

Reserve

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Reserve then yourself for happier Times, he has Need of Comfort, and 'tis from you that he expects and wants it the most. Do not delay then, by your Example, to animate him with those Degrees of Patience and Fortitude which are so absolutely necessary. You have no Time to lose, if you are willing that he should hear from you during his Stay at *Buckingham*.

Fanny could not take a more effectual Method to relieve me from my Concern. There was somewhat in her Advice so suitable to my own natural Inclination, that I found myself in a little while disposed to conform to it. The Letter I now wrote to Mr. *Drake* was more tender than ever, and indeed I believe my Affection was grown stronger, and *Fanny's* Approbation of it seemed to have made

made some Additions to its Force. The Letter was sent, and I had an Answer from Mr. Drake before his Sister paid me a Visit. I was prepared for it in some Measure by Mr. *Drake's* Letter, with which I was as well satisfied as I had been before with the Assurances I had given him of my own Sincerity and Constancy.

It was not long after, before his Sister came to see me. She made *Becconsfield* in her Road out of *Devonshire*; I had Notice of her coming by *Duncombe*, who arrived some little Time before her. He told me, that his Mistress would be with me about twelve o'Clock the next Day.

The Account that Mr. *Drake* had given me of *Duncombe* prejudiced me not a little against him; I received him therefore very coolly, and did not so much as

ask

ask him after his Master. He perceived very plainly that I mistrusted him, and told me, that, notwithstanding he was in the utmost Hurry to get to *London*, yet he would not leave me before he had justified his Conduct. It was in vain I assured him that I had no Reason to complain of him ; he owned all that he had been obliged to do in order to prejudice young Mr. *Drake* against me, assured me that his Behaviour had not been agreeable to his Inclinations, and that he had much rather have quitted Mr. *Drake's* Family, than to live under the Restraint he had done for some Time. That, besides, as he was constantly employed by Sir *Thomas*, it was out of his Power to serve the one without betraying the other. It is true indeed, continued he, that the Behaviour I was obliged to observe to-

wards

wards young Mr. *Drake* induced him to withdraw his Confidence from me, in order to give it entirely to Mrs. *Fletcher*; but, Madam, can you doubt of my Fidelity to your Interests, when you hear that, notwithstanding all Mr. *Drake's* Endeavours to keep it a Secret, I discovered a private Correspondence carried on between you without ever betraying to any one that I knew any such Matter?

Heavens! said I (persuaded that he was not certain of what he had advanced, but only endeavoured to deceive me) what is it you have been talking of?— Madam, said he, I know very well what I am saying. I saw one of your Letters in Mr. *Drake's* Hands, and carried his Answer to the Post, directed to a Lady in this House. However, do not be alarmed; I am incapable of hurting you.

My

My Lady does not know any Thing that has happened, and I am wholly ignorant of what Sir *Thomas* intends I should do. But be assured of this, that in what ever Situation he places me, I will never forget the Commands of my late dying Master; and that I shall be always more devoted to your Service than to any Thing else.

This Part of his Conversation seemed so open and sincere, that I thought myself obliged to make some Excuses. I owned indeed, that I had wrote to Mr. *Drake*; but it was only to advise him to comply with his Parents Injunctions. I should have entered into a much longer Detail, if *Duncombe* had been at leisure to have heard it; but he was in such a Hurry to get to *London*, that he scarce gave me time to go into my Room to fetch

fetch the Annuity Bond, which it was necessary he should have, in order to receive the Money that was due on it. He set off as soon as I had given it him ; and the next Morning my Lady came at the Time he had told me.

She enquired for Mrs. *Hampden*, and staid with her half an Hour, and then sent for me, when I did not find in my Lady that tender Friendship which she had shewn me soon after the Death of her Uncle. As she did not know I had been ill, she dwelt much on the Alteration that she perceived in my Looks, and then asked me many Questions about my Manner of Living, and, in short, before Mrs. *Hampden*, discoursed only in general Terms ; which shewed rather a Desire of appearing, than being really my Friend. On my Side too I pretended to be more

affected

affected with her Enquiries than I really was. I commended the Care of Mrs. *Hampden* and Miss *Fanny*, the latter of whom my Lady was desirous of seeing, and seemed quite transported with her Person and Modesty. She made use of such tender Expressions in thanking her for what she had done for me, that I easily perceived it was more owing to her personal Merit, than to my Lady's Gratitude.

My Lady had been about an Hour in the Parlour when Mrs. *Hampden* made use of the Excuse, that she might have somewhat particular to say to me, to withdraw, and took Miss *Fanny* along with her.

Well, my dear *Polly*, said my Lady, as soon as we were alone, I must give you some Account of my Brother. You can-

not

not conceive how joyfully he is set out on his Travels. I would have had him wrote to you, and taken a last Farewel, at least, but the poor Child could never take a Resolution to do it. I believe he is so much ashamed of his Inconstancy, that he will never be able to look you in the Face again. As I have no Reserve with you, continued she, I must own that he fell in love with a Lady in the Country, with whom he seemed enamoured to Distraction ; but as soon as it was proposed to him to set out on his Travels, his Passion soon gave way, and easily subsided. You see he is a Kind of Man that one must endeavour to forget as soon as one can. If I recollect aright, he told me that he wrote you a Letter before he left *London* ; and I should be glad to know the Method he made use of to break with you.

you. Madam, said I, in as serious a Manner as she appeared to be in jest, he did indeed write to me. I received from him a Letter, in which his Sentiments appear to me to be so very reasonable, that I did not hesitate a Moment at suit-ing my Behaviour to them: In short, Madam, I think no more of Mr. *Drake*, and in no other Manner than in that in which he has described himself in the Letter that he wrote me. I am extremely glad, answered her Ladyship, to find that your Conduct has been so reasonable.

I readily own that I wilfully led my Lady into an Error through my equivo-cal Answer; and her Affectation in en-deavouring to deceive me, confirmed me the more in my Resolution to deceive her.

She then obliged me to give her an Account

Account of the Adventure upon the Road; and in order to induce me to it, told me Mr. *Duncombe* had wrote an imperfect Account of it to her Husband. I begged that she would excuse my saying any Thing about it, as I had given my Word that I would never mention it. Nay, I went so far as to desire her not to insist on Mrs. *Duncombe*'s disclosing the Affair; the only End of which would be the incensing her against her Husband. She seemed satisfied with what I had said, and at last took her Leave, after some faint Assurances of the Continuance of her Friendship; to which I replied, by assuring her, I should ever keep her Favours in Remembrance. She pursued her Journey, and I returned to my dear Friend, Miss *Fanny*.

I received several Letters from Mr.

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F

Drake,

Drake, for he kept his Word in writing to me, from the several Places where he stopped before he got to *Portsmouth*; and *Miss Fanny*, to whom I had imparted the Contents of each, remarked with Satisfaction both the Constancy of his Affection, and the Improvements that had taken place in his Understanding. My Answers were directed to him at *Portsmouth*, till the unhappy Time in which he gave me Notice on what Day he was to take ship. Notwithstanding *Fanny*'s Care to comfort me on this News, that cruel Moment increased, and even added fresh Anxieties to those I had already felt, on Account of the Dangers to which he was going to be exposed; to the Cruelty of being separated from him, and to the Impediment which the Distance he was going to, of my hearing so frequently

from

from him as I could have wished. In short, I stood in need of the utmost Efforts of Reason, to compose the Distraction and Uneasiness of my Mind. How many Times did I put *Fanny's* Patience to the Trial in the Space of three Months ! During all which Time, I was in a cruel Suspense, with respect to Mr. *Drake*; and, however excuseable I might then be, I cannot help reproaching myself at present for that Peevishness, which must have been so disgusting to the Tenderness of my Friend.

I received a Letter at length, which was dated from *Vienna*, in which Mr. *Drake* informed me, that he had been ill for some Time, which was the Reason of my not hearing from him before; that he was now perfectly recovered, and intended to take a Campaign in the Em-

peror's Army. I need not mention the Alarm which this Account gave me, of which the Description in my Answer was but a feeble Representation. What I felt was beyond all Expression ; Self-Love mingled itself sometimes with my own torturing Reflections, and this it was that made me bear up against so many Misfortunes ; for those which were occasioned by the Absence of my Lover, and the Danger to which he was exposed, were not the only ones that oppressed me. I am in haste to give an Account of what I felt for him, in order to pass on to those Evils in which he had no other Share than the Concern which he felt from being informed of them.

I have before said, that Self-Love was sometimes a Remedy against the Pressure of the Misfortunes I lay under. And, indeed,

deed, I thought that every Thing Mr. *Drake* undertook for the Sake of Honour, reflected back some Portion of that Honour on myself. I fed myself with this Kind of Vanity, which had for its Foundation a Tenderness which made me concerned in all Mr. *Drake's* Actions. I prided myself a little that I shared somewhat in common with so many brave Warriors. In short, I compared Mr. *Drake* to those antient Heroes, of whose Exploits I had formerly read, and thought that his Tenderness would certainly reflect upon me some Portion of the Reputation which he acquired by his Valour. These flattering Thoughts, which were partly owing to the Manner in which I had been brought up, and partly to some undigested Reflections which I had picked up in Books, however romantic they may

seem, were, doubtless, of great Assistance to me ; and *Fanny* herself did not disdain to make use of them, to fill me with comfortable Hopes. She made use, as I may say, of my own Weakness, to bring me back to a more composed and sedate Temper of Mind, which, perhaps, Reason and Argument would have endeavoured to restore in vain. By this ingenuous, as well as tender and compassionate Method, she found Means to give me a Relish at length for more substantial and solid Comforts ; and, I must own that she managed my Self-Love so well, that she made it triumph over my Grief, without perceiving itself at all affected.

I must here acquaint my Readers, that Mr. *Drake* took every Opportunity to let me hear from him, and that I constantly returned immediate Answers. I have
made

made mention of this here, that I may not interrupt the Narrative of the Incidents that befel me during his Absence. It is with some Difficulty that I prevail on myself to seem to forget him, at a Time in which his Memory was so precious; but, however, I chuse rather to be guilty of this Forgetfulness, which is only so in Appearance, rather than break, as I said before, the Thread of the Narration. However, before this is begun, it may be proper to mention some Accidents that made me contribute towards an Event, which, had it not been for an extraordinary Interposition of Providence, must infallibly have embittered the Remainder of my Life.

I have already mentioned that *Duncombe* had given me Notice of Lady *Drake's* Visit on her Return to Town,

and that I had been obliged to fetch him, in a Hurry, my Annuity Bond, in order for him to receive the Money that was due on it. When I took out this Bond, I did not observe that the Certificate, inserted in the Beginning of these Memoirs, which contained an Account of the Time and Place of my Birth, the Description of the Bracelet, and the little Note at the Bottom; I did not observe, I say, that these Papers were all inclosed in the Bond that I had given to *Duncombe*, and, who himself, was in such a Hurry to set out, that he did not then perceive it. I should, perhaps, have been ignorant for some Time of the Mistake I had made, if this Certificate had not been sent me about a Month afterwards, by Lady *Drake*, as from as Sir *Thomas*, her Husband, into whose Hands *Duncombe* had thought

thought proper to place it. I had received the Arrears of my Bond since that Time ; so that I had quite forgot it in a little while, as if no such Thing had happened. I was going on in great Composure, when all of a sudden Miss *Fanny* fell sick, and that so violently, that she was thought to be in great Danger. Her Condition, deservedly, engaging my whole Attention, I would fain have sat up with her Night and Day, and desired it as a Favour, that I might be permitted sometimes ; but I had the Disappointment to find that she refused an Offer, which the Tenderness I had for her, required me to make ; and, in a few Days, I had Orders not to go into her Room.

It was just at this Time that Mr. *Perry* came to see me. After some Conversation upon indifferent Matters, Pray,

said he, did not Colonel *Grimstone* tell me, that he had preserved some Papers and a Bracelet, which were found upon you at the Time of his taking you up? I told him that he had; he then said, that if I had those Papers and the Bracelet, he should be glad to see them. Upon this I was seized with so unaccountable a Trembling, that I could hardly speak. I made several Attempts to pull off the Bracelet in vain. I at length got it off, and put it into Mr. *Perry's* Hands, and leaving it with him, ran to my Room for the Papers. As soon as I had given them to him, I perceived that he read them with Attention, and was comparing them with some others that he had in his Hands. While he was thus employed, I was in an odd Situation between Fear and Impatience, to know the Secret of

my

my Birth. Indeed it was a good while since I had thought seriously about it; but now I found my former anxiety renewed.

I experienced at this Time such a mixture of Grief and Confusion, that, had it been left to my Choice, I should, in all Probability, have preferred my present Ignorance to the Information I was going to receive. But I could not avoid it; and whatsoever might be the Consequence, I felt that I desired them with more Earnestness than I had room to be apprehensive they might prejudice me. Mr. *Perry* soon put an End to this extraordinary Conflict, by saying, My Dear Child, I find so exact an Agreement in the Papers that I have compared, with respect to the several Circumstances of your Birth, that I can no

longer doubt but that Heaven will soon restore to you a tender Mother, whose Virtues will abundantly compensate for the Misfortunes you have hitherto sustained. Heavens! cried I, with an Emotion that cannot be described, Is it possible that you have really found my Mother? I would have said more, but could not give my Thoughts utterance. Yes, my Dear Child, said Mr. *Perry*, Heaven restores you your Mother; and I am extremely pleased to find in you such Emotions of Tenderness. But will not what I am going to tell you, give a Shock to your Tenderness? No, I can never think it can have any such Effect on you. In short, my Dear *Polly*, you must know, that although your Mother is of a good Family, yet she is not in a Condition to give you Credit by owning
you,

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you, since her Fortune is extremely small: Alas ! Sir, said I, almost drowned in Tears, which were the Effects of my Tenderness, she shall be the Mistress of every Thing that I possess, and I shall think myself too happy. Hear what I have to say to you, said Mr. *Perry*, interrupting me; your Birth, my Dear Child, was the Effect of a criminal Passion, insomuch that your Mother cannot own you, without reflecting Disgrace on herself. She lives with a Woman of Fortune, who is exceedingly fond of her, and with whom, therefore, it is her Interest to keep in Favour. I need not tell you how much it is her Concern, both on her own Account and yours, to keep the Secret with which I have intrusted you. Alas ! Sir, said I, the only Person that I should have had the least Inclination

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tion to have told it to, is not in a Condition to hear it. Miss *Fanny* is in great Danger, and I am forbid going into her Room. I must own to you, indeed, that I should have felt a great Pleasure, in imparting to her what you have heard. I cannot but praise you, said Mr. *Perry*, for this steady attachment to your fair Friend, and indeed it is due from you out of a Principle of Gratitude: however, it would not be proper to tell her this yet a while; you may perhaps by and by, if your Mother consents to it, for she would not by any Means drag you out of your Retirement: she intends only sometimes to see you.

I heard Mr. *Perry*, without presuming to declare what I thought with Respect to Retirement. All I felt at present was a mixture of Tenderness and Confusion.

'Tis

"Tis true, indeed, I had found my Mother ; but then the Disgrace of my Birth was fully confirmed, and yet I felt, that if my Mother was less respectable in the Eye of the World, yet she ought not to be less dear to me on that Account. I betrayed to Mr. *Perry*, some Curiosity to know by what Means he had discovered a Secret that had lain hid so long a Time. My Dear Child, said he, I will tell you. About eight Days ago, as I intended coming here soon, I thought it proper to pay a Visit to Lady *Drake*, to know whether she had any Commands. I was so unlucky as not to meet with her at home ; but knowing, that Sir *Thomas* was within, I paid my Visit to him, and told him I should have an Opportunity of seeing you soon. He talked of you some Time with a good deal of Indifference, being very much dissatisfied,

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sied, as I imagined, at your having refused his Proposals. I was going to take my Leave, when pretending to recollect something that he had forgot, he took hold of me, and asked me whether some one had not been at my House to enquire for you? He told me, that a Woman very well dressed had come to him, and asked after you, and that he had directed her to me. I assured him that I had not seen any such Person, and then took my Leave.

Two Days after, the very same Person (according to the Description) came to me, as she said, from Lady *Drake*, and told me that that Lady had assured her I could give her some Account of you; that she had told her I was the Person that had placed you in the Situation you were in at present; and that, therefore,

fore, I was the most proper Person to apply to for any Enquiries in which she might want Satisfaction. After some previous Discourse with her, she confessed that, having been seduced, through a Promise of Marriage, she had yielded to her Lover's unlawful Desires; that the Promise had never been accomplished; and that she found herself in a short Time after big with Child, whom she was obliged to expose at Kensington, where she had lain in; that she had taken care to put a Bracelet on the Child, and a Note which might contribute some Time or other towards their Discovery of each other. She told me, in short, that this Child, the very Day after it's being exposed, had been taken up by a Gentleman of Fortune, and that she had not heard of it since, but that she had lived in the Hope of the Gentleman's taking

taking Care of it ; that, having heard accidentally of a young Girl, named *Polly*, who had been brought up by Colonel *Grimstone* as Mrs. *Duncombe*'s Daughter ; and having since found out that Mrs. *Duncombe* was not her Mother in Reality, it came into her Mind, that this might possibly be her Child. Upon this, I examined her carefully as to the Day of your Birth, the Place you had been exposed in, and the Note that she said she had left with you. In short, every Thing seems to bear so exact a Relation to your Story, that there cannot be the least Doubt, but that this Woman is in reality your Mother. I was willing to know her Situation in Life, and this was the Account that I was afraid would rather shock you. She lives in *Lady Sb----y*'s Family ; but her Fortune, as I said before, is exceeding small, and she will be able herself to inform

form you of what farther concerns you, for she longs to see you; and I promised that I would conduct you to *Uxbridge*, where she will come to meet you. She would not have given you the Trouble of coming so far, if her Lady could have spared her; and I do not doubt but you will think it a Pleasure to comply with her Request of seeing you soon.

Mr. *Perry* took his Leave of me for the present, and left me in a State of Joy, Wonder, and Perplexity. I had Reason to rejoice in the Discovery of my Mother; but still this was damped with melancholy Reflections, which were continually preying on the Disgrace of my Birth. I was born criminally, and in Slavery, two insurmountable Objections to Mr. *Drake's* Designs. The Uncertainty of my Birth, while it continued doubtful, was turned

by

by my Lover to my Advantage ; but when the Lowness of my Parentage once came to be ascertained, this, I thought, could not fail of putting an End to what he might otherwise have intended. Such Reflections as these employed my whole Thoughts for six Days ; they had this good Effect, however, that they contributed to the making me put in practice the only Scheme I judged most expedient in my present Situation.

I resolved to conceal the late Incident from Mr. *Drake*, till I should be thoroughly convinced of the Truth of it. I determined, therefore, to put into my Mother's Hands the little Fortune I was Mistress of ; and by that Means, I was in hopes of inducing her to come and live with me, which would have prevented Mr. *Drake* from being acquainted with her

real

real Circumstances. In short, though I was far from being thoroughly satisfied with my present Situation, yet despairing of Mr. *Drake*, as thinking myself unworthy of him, I looked upon it, at least, as a necessary Resource in the present Posture of my Affairs. And, accordingly, the Evening before my Departure, I communicated to Mr. *Perry* the Resolution I had taken, with respect both to my Mother and myself.

We were to set out very early the next Morning; but what gave me the most Concern, was, that I was obliged to set out without having the Satisfaction of seeing Miss *Fanny*. I entreated that I might be admitted to her Apartment, which at length was granted me; but it was upon Condition, that I should not say a Word of my going to *London*.

Her

Her Life was too precious to me, and I was too impatient to see her, not to agree to that Condition. I was accordingly conducted to her Apartment, but what a melancholy Object did I behold! She was pale and wan; and her languid Eyes, which she cast upon me, were instantly filled with Tears. I was so much affected at the Sight, that it was with Difficulty I threw myself into her Arms, which she stretched out for that Purpose. My dear *Polly*, and my dear *Fanny*, was all that we could say. Her Physician, who was present, requested me to retire, giving me to understand, that the violent Emotion she was in would be of dangerous Consequence to her Health. I was forced to obey, and retired to my Chamber with a good deal of Concern, at being obliged to leave so tender and sincere a Friend;

but, as I had Reason to think that my Stay in *London* would not be long, I flattered myself with the Hopes of returning very soon, in order to enjoy the Pleasure I should feel at her Recovery.

I packed up every Thing that was necessary, and set out the next Day with Mr. *Perry*, in the Stage, and we went to *Uxbridge* without stopping; during which Time, my Mind was in a most violent Agitation. Joy and Tenderness had their several Vicissitudes; and these had such fast hold on my Spirits, that when we came to the Inn, I was quite faint.

Mr. *Perry* went in before me; he had asked if Mrs. *Meadows* was come, and immediately ordered a Room, desiring me to follow him. He had told me as we came along, to call Mrs. *Meadows* Aunt, whilst in Company; and to take care

care that I did not betray myself, till we were alone, and more at liberty. I got into the Room soon after Mr. *Perry*; and as soon as Mrs. *Meadows* saw me, she ran up to me immediately. Well, my dear Child, said she, I have greatly longed to see you; and, then turning to Mr. *Perry*, what a charming Girl is she grown! This Compliment, which at any other Time would have flattered my Vanity, gave me a great Shock at the very Instant of its being said. I had expected Transports, the very Idea of which greatly surpassed my Imagination. I thought within myself, that the Emotions of a Parent should have been greatly superior to those which I experienced myself, insomuch, that I conceived it utterly impossible for me to have any Notion of them; but the cool Commendations

tions of Mrs. *Meadows* confounded me in such a Manner, that I really was not able to make any Reply. Mr. *Perry* made an Answer for me. He exaggerated the Transports that I felt on the Prospect of seeing her; and, in short, gave her to understand, that the Endowments of the Mind were greatly to be valued above the Poor and perishing Beauty of the Body; and that, therefore, it was the former that she ought to pay the greater Respect to; and that it was more especially a Parent's Duty to endeavour to cultivate and improve such valuable Blessings; and then addressing himself to me, he said, that he was satisfied he had no need to recommend Dutifulness and Affection to me. I assured him that he need not, and so did Mrs. *Meadows*, tho' both of us betrayed a good deal of Confusion.

fusion. Mr. *Perry* made an Excuse for not being able to stay any longer, and then took his Leave. I would fain have seen him to the Coach, because I seemed to have so much to say to him, but he would not suffer me to do it; and altho' I found myself extremely embarrassed at being left alone with my Mother, yet I was obliged to submit to it.

As soon as Mr. *Perry* was gone, Mrs. *Meadows* resumed her usual Gaiety; but, as to myself, I could not account for the little Satisfaction that I took in an Interview, which ought to have been so interesting to me. I blamed myself for it, and was persuaded that it proceeded from the Mortification of my Vanity, at finding my Mother in so low a Condition. I thought, however, that the most effectual Method to awaken both my Mother's Tenderness

Tenderness and my own, would be to lay before her the Papers I had received, which contained the Proofs that I was really her Daughter. But I was still more surprised than ever, when she told me, that we might defer this Matter till another Time; that she was sufficiently convinced, by what Mr. *Perry* had told her, that I was her Daughter in reality, and that the exact Resemblance I bore to my Father, was an additional Proof of it. This last Declaration renewed my Sensibility. Is it then, said I, my Father's Picture that is contained in the Bracelet? Yes, yes, said she, it is; however, it is now Time for us to go to Dinner, and, remember, you are only to call me Aunt. There seemed to be a great Boldness and Indifference in every Thing my Mother said, which I could not then account for,

but which was sufficiently explained to me afterwards.

As soon as Dinner was over, we took a Post-Chaise, and set out for *London*. Our Conversation on the Way was not very interesting. Mrs. *Meadows* asked me many Questions about the Method in which I had been brought up, by Colonel *Grimstone*. I expatiated on the Praises of my dear Benefactor, and did not forget to mention the Obligations I laid under to Mrs. *Duncombe*. I hoped she would permit me to let her know where I was, as soon as I got to *London*, that I might inform her how happily I had discovered my Mother. It was in vain that I represented to her, how much I could depend on her. She would not give her Consent to my doing any such Thing. She had so many Reasons, she said, for concealing the

the Relation that she bore to me, especially from *Duncombe* and his Wife, who, if they were apprised of it, would, in all probability, suspect her to be the Person ; and might possibly discover, what it was her Interest to keep secret. She dwelt much on the Favours I had received from the Colonel, and on the Obligation I laid under of being obedient to his Family. This Sentiment of my Mother's, however reasonable in itself, yet shocked me a little: I did not dare to inform her of Sir *Thomas*'s Attempt ; and yet was persuaded in my own Mind, that what she had in View, was the Offer he had made me of marrying Mr. *Tibbald*, which, however, I was in hopes Mr. *Perry* would hinder from ever taking Effect.

I heard what my Mother had to say with Attention, and assured her, that I

G. 3. would.

would never fail in Instances of the Duty and Respect which were most undoubtedly owing her.

We at last got to *London*, and the Chaise set us down in *Jermyn-Street*. My Mother carried me to a House, where she said she had hired me an Apartment, as it was impossible for me to live at Lady *Sb---y*'s, where she did ; but she told me it was so near, that we might see one another easily, at all Hours of the Day.

The Apartment I went into was neat and convenient. The Mistress of the House assured me, that I should not want for any Thing, and should be very well waited on. My pretended Aunt recommended me very strongly to her, and left me, in order to return to her Lady ; who, my Landlady informed me, lived in the same Street, but a very few Doors off, which

was

was Matter of great Comfort to me; though I must own, there was so great a Disproportion between the Idea I had formed to myself of a Meeting between my Mother and me, and that which had really passed, that my Thoughts were much distracted.

I was now entering on a new World, for which I was by no means suited, either by my Temper or Inclination. I spent the whole Night in reflecting on the Contrast that there was between my present Situation, and that in which I had been brought up. The Remembrance of Mr. *Drake*, and our mutual Affection, was so far from being any Mitigation of my Uneasiness, that it seemed considerably to increase it; and all my Comfort was, in thinking that I should not stay long in *London*, and that I should find it no dif-

ficult Matter to persuade my Mother to retire with me to *Becconsfield*, by offering her the little Fortune I was Mistress of ; and I did not make the least Doubt, but she would prefer a Way of Living so much above that into which her Misfortunes had thrown her, and was impatient to see her, to talk with her on the Subject.

While I was dressing myself for this Purpose, my Landlady came into the Room. She seemed surprised at seeing me up, and told me, that such a pretty Girl as I was ought to have taken Time to have rested herself. I thanked her for her Compliment, and told her I was going to pay my Aunt a Visit. She made Answer that she was to dine with us ; and that then I might discourse with her at my Leisure. In the mean Time, said she, we will go to Breakfast, and then to Church,

Church, if you please (for it was *Sunday*.)
I agreed to her Proposal.

Mrs. *Rigby* (for that was my Landlady's Name) was bestowing continual Commendations on my Face and Shape. What a Pity it was, she said, that I should live in the Country! I heard all she said with a good deal of Indifference, and whenever obliged to answer, it was with the utmost Reserve.

As soon as we had breakfasted, we went to St. James's Church, which was the nearest our Lodgings. The Service was just begun, when I saw my pretended Aunt come in, following a Lady excessively beautiful. Mrs. *Rigby* took care to forewarn me not to seem to know Mrs. *Meadows*, who came close by me, as she was going to her Pew, and gave me a Signal, intimating the same that Mrs.

Rigby had cautioned me about. I could not help looking attentively on Lady *Sb--y*, though I was frequently put out of countenance at finding that I had engaged her Attention.

When the Service was ended, we went out of Church before them; and had scarce been at Home a Quarter of an Hour, when Mrs. *Meadows* came in. I was too eager to talk with her in private, not to betray evident Signs of my Impatience, but I was obliged to undergo a Repetition of Mrs. *Rigby*'s Compliments. All Dinner-time she was in the same Strain; and Mrs. *Meadows* was so pleased with them, that, probably, there would have been no End of them, had I not, with the utmost Politeness, intimated to my Landlady, that I had somewhat very particular to say to my Aunt, with whom

I immediately went into my Apartment. The Sum of what I said, was as follows :

“ Since Providence, Madam, has permitted me to discover to whom I am, in great Measure, indebted for my Being ; be assured, that I shall ever consider this Discovery as one of the greatest Blessings that ever befel me. Do not be apprehensive that the Education I have received, will ever make me blush, either on account of my unfortunate Birth, or for the Lowness of your Situation. The Proposal I have now to make to you proceeds solely from my Tenderness and Gratitude. Every Thing that I possess, through the late Colonel’s Generosity, is yours. The only Favour I have to beg, is, that you will employ a small Part of it in settling me in the Country, whither I am resolved to retire. I shall then

want nothing to complete my Happiness, but your coming to live with me. Your Presence, Example, and Advice, will be of infinite Use to me."

Dear Niece, said Mrs. *Meadows* (for I must use myself to call you thus) I am extremely pleased with the Generosity of your Disposition, nor do I intend in the least to oppose your Scheme of Retirement: one Thing, however, I must observe to you---Before you, in a Manner, separate yourself from the World, it is necessary that you should know somewhat of it. You do not know what you are giving up, before you have seen the Advantages that you are likely to meet with. As to myself, I cannot accompany you; but with respect to your own Behaviour, you may regulate that as you shall think proper, when you have staid here some

Time,

Time, in order to know what Life is. Depend upon it, the World is calculated to please a Person at your Time of Life; and I am sure it would be your own Fault, if you did not make some advantageous Settlement in it. But in **order to** this, you must see somewhat of the World; you must go to Plays, Masquerades, Assemblies, and the like. These are the Amusements that I shall put you in the Way of. My dear Aunt, said I, permit me to beg that I may not stir out hence, while I stay in *London*. I have been too well instructed in the Danger of publick Amusements, to think of going to them with Pleasure. And this I am sure of, that were Mr. *Perry* to know it, he would be exceedingly sorry. Truly, interrupted Mrs. *Meadows*, you have much Reason to care whether he is sorry or no;

it

it is my Business, and not his. When one is in the World, one must do as others do.

After about an Hour's Conversation, pretty much in the same Strain, a Footman from Lady *Sb---y*, desired to speak with Mrs. *Meadows*. He brought her a Note, the Contents of which informed her, that her Lady did not intend to go into the Country as she had designed. My Aunt asked the Footman whether he knew how his Mistress was engaged. The Man told her, he believed she was to sup at Lady *T-----e's*. This turns out extremely luckily, said Mrs. *Meadows*, dismissing the Footman; you shall sup out to Night with an intimate Friend of mine. It was in vain that I attempted to excuse myself, on account of the Fatigue I had undergone the Day before.

She

She insisted upon it so peremptorily, that I could not help complying. She left me, in order, as she said, to give some Directions to the Servants at her Lady's; and I remained quite astonished at her Want of Delicacy in Opinion, and of Prudence in her Conduct.

No, said I, to myself, this Woman can never be my Mother; but, as soon as I recollect that Mr. *Perry* had put me into her Hands, I blamed myself for entertaining such unwarrantable Suspicions. Alas! said I, she had not the same Advantages in her Youth that I have been favoured with. I reproached myself for not asking the Name of my Father; but when I considered how cruel it would be, thus to put my Mother in mind of what she should wish to forget, I determined at length to go to Mr. *Perry*, the next Day, and

and give him an Account of my Situation ; not doubting, he would advise my Mother to send me back into the Country. I spent near three Hours before I came to this Resolution. It was dark when Mrs. *Meadows* came to call for me in a Coach ; and notwithstanding the great Reluctance that I expressed, she still insisted on my going. All the Information I got by the Way was, that the House we were going to was a little out of Town. Mrs. *Meadows* likewise told me, that it was possible, we might not find the Lady at home, because, in all probability, she was gone to the Play ; but that she would return as soon as it was over. We at length arrived at this Country-House, though, indeed, I did not perceive that we had quitted the Town. My Aunt enquired, eagerly, if the Lady was at Home,

Home, and was answered in the Negative, but we might come in if we pleased. We were then conducted into a very neat Saloon, on one Side of which was a Closet, which opened into a Garden. From thence we were carried into the upper Apartments, which were all furnished rather with Taste than Magnificence; and, soon after, we returned to the Saloon, which in the mean Time had been lighted up.

About half an Hour after we had been there, we heard a Coach in the Court-Yard. I had before observed some Confusion in Mrs. *Meadows*, but just at this Time it seemed greatly to increase. I was pressing her to make up to the Lady whom I expected, when I saw a Man come in, whom my Astonishment at first prevented from distinguishing, but you

may

may judge of my Surprize, when I found it to be Sir *Thomas Drake*. Oh! Mother, said I, into what Place have you brought me? and instantly funk down into a Chair. Sir *Thomas* immediately threw himself upon his Knees. He spoke to me with great Emotion, took hold of my Hands, and would fain have hindered my crying out, as also the Attempts I was making to escape.

The base Mrs. *Meadows*, without giving me any Assistance, affected to remonstrate, but in a very cool Manner, and which she only interrupted by giving me the most shocking Advice that could possibly be suggested. I was equally incapable of listening to her Advice, of hearing her Reproaches, or of attending to Sir *Thomas*. All I depended on, was on my crying out, with which I made the whole

Build-

Building echo. I flattered myself that I should make myself heard ; and that Pity, at least, would procure me that Assistance which I stood so much in need of in my present Situation. I was at last got loose from Sir *Thomas*, and was going towards the Door of the Saloon, in order to escape, when Sir *Thomas* got before me, and we struggled some Time, he to hinder, and I to accomplish the opening of the Door. I was calling out all this while for Assistance, and felt myself pretty nigh spent, when my Deliverance was effected by a Person from whom I expected it the least. A Servant of Sir *Thomas*'s opened the Door, but it was not so much to afford me any Relief, as to acquaint his Master of the Embarrassment that would ensue. Sir, said he, my Lady *Sb----*y is at the Door; and insists on being let in.

Sir

Sir *Thomas* upon this was in great Consternation, and desired us to step into the Closet for a Moment, where we were scarce entered, when a Lady was introduced. Sir *Thomas* attempted, but in vain, to seem composed, and Mrs. *Meadows*'s first Care was to endeavour to open the Door that looked into the Garden, in order to make her Escape, but it was barred on the outside. We were, therefore, obliged to stay in the Closet without any Light, where we might easily hear the Conversation that was going forward in the Saloon.

My Lady began with reproaching Sir *Thomas* for being so perfidious, after the many Attempts he had made to seduce her, as to think that his Conquest was quite sure, and that he was certain of attaining it. She added, that she thought

herself

herself sufficiently happy in not having given way to a Weakness that would surely have made her repent of her Credulity afterwards. Sir *Thomas* had but little to say in his Defence. He told her he came to give some Directions to his Servants, and to say that he did not intend to sup there. How is it possible, said the Lady, that I can believe you? It was with the utmost Difficulty that you engaged me to Supper. You know very well how averse I was to the complying; you told me that your whole Intention was to please me; and that you had nothing to interrupt you, and yet this very Day you came and acquainted me, that you was obliged to go into the Country upon Business of Importance. I was so foolish as to believe you, and accordingly paid a Visit to Lady *T-----e*; where

a Gentleman came in, and asked me, how I came to be without you, adding, that you was gallanting it away at the Play, where he had left you, with the beautiful Miss C---y. Upon that, I must own, I suspected you had deceived me, and accordingly came here to know the Truth ; and find you as much embarrassed, and out of Countenance, as People that act like you most usually are. You tell me you are going away ; your Horses I know are in the Stable, and your Servants are making ready the Entertainment you design for my Rival. Besides, said she, I am sure you are not alone ; but, by the Disorder you are in, this Conquest seems to have cost you very dear. Will you not favour me with a Sight of that little Prude, who comes Abroad thus to frighten her Lovers ?

Sir *Thomas*, who had Time at last to recollect himself, interrupted her thus: Well, Madam, have you had your Jest out? You think me, I dare say, the most contemptible Creature you know, and you have pretty openly betrayed your own Want of Temper upon no better a Foundation than Suspicion. I paid a Visit this Morning to the Duke of *K*----; I found Lord *Charles M*---- with him, and they were both at a *Loſ* where they should spend the Evening with some Ladies of their Acquaintance. The Duke having left his Country-House to *Miss C*----y, he asked me for mine; and you know it was out of my Power to refuse him; I therefore offered to give him a Supper, depending upon the Orders that I had already given, in Expectation of your Company. The Duke readily

readily accepted my Proposal, on Condition that I would make one in the Party. As I thought there was no Need of acquainting you with this Detail, I pretended that Business called me into the Country, and this is all the Baseness with which you have been pleased to reproach me. As to the rest, Madam, you see how exceedingly you have expos'd yourself. In all probability the Duke and the Ladies will come presently, are you willing they should find you here? You had better take my Advice, and retire; I am very ready to follow you, since I can very easily excuse my Absence to the Duke. No, no, Sir, said my Lady, unfortunately for yourself, your Pretence is so gross, that, in a Manner, it detects itself. I will not be duped so continually as I have been; I happen, luckily, to know the

very Place where the Duke is engaged, and I can give you my Word he will not trouble you To-night. I would lay a good Wager, that *C----y* is the Person to whom I am to be sacrificed ; but, if you wait for her, I assure you, you'll be disappointed. I know what became of her as soon as the Play was over. Lord *T----* had pre-engaged her ; it was with this Persuasion, that I presumed to come hither, and reproach you in the Manner that you deserve ; and still farther assure you, that you will never get the better of that Contempt, which your this Day's Behaviour has given me for you. Sir *Thomas* replied warmly, and both Parties began to be incensed against each other.

Mrs. *Meadows*, who heard what passed as well as me, was terribly alarmed : As for me, who expected that this Lady's coming

would deliver me from the Danger to which I was expos'd, I was far from being displeased at her Visit. I would have opened the Closet Door immediately, and presented myself to my Lady with that Confidence which Innocence naturally inspires, had not Mrs. *Meadows* prevented me: As I had Reason to fear that the Lady, provoked as she was at Sir *Thomas*'s Behaviour, would presently go away, and leave me in the same Situation as before; I made new Efforts, which Mrs. *Meadows* could no longer prevent. The Noise that I made, engaged the Lady's Attention, and she opened the Door. Our Surprize at seeing each other was pretty near equal; and although my Eyes were almost drowned in Tears, I recollect'd immediately that it was my Lady *Sb---y*, my Mother's Mistress, whom I had

had seen that very Day at Church. Nor was she at all less forward in making out who I was. What, said she, is this the pretty Thing that was so stared at, at Church to Day, and have you seduced her already ? I congratulate you upon it. As for you, Child, continued she, addressing herself to me, I must own that your prim Countenance deceived me. I never suspected in the Morning that you was Sir *Thomas*'s —— Alas ! Madam, said I, throwing myself at her Feet, I beseech you to hear me ; my Mother brought me here---She fetched me out of the Country. Your Mother, said my Lady, where is the wicked Wretch ? No, Madam, said I, I have made a Mistake ; it is my Aunt ; she is in the Closet, and will confirm to you the Truth of what I have been relating.

I was confounded that the Name of Mother had inadvertently escaped me ; and being willing to make amends for the Imprudence I had been guilty of, I did not consider that I was going to increase my Lady's Suspicions, by substituting the Title of Aunt in its Stead. Poor Child, said my Lady, you are not yet Mistress of your Trade. Pray let us see this honest Gentlewoman, that is both your Mother and Aunt.

Sir *Thomas* attempted, but in vain, to hinder her from going into the Closet, where Mrs. *Meadows* was concealed ; and she, on the other hand, endeavoured to fasten herself in ; but my Lady forced open the Door, and while she was employed in looking about for the Person who could no longer escape her, Sir *Thomas* came to me, and would fain have persuaded me

to have gone home under the Conduct of one of his People; but I refused to entrust myself to any of their Management. No, Sir, said I, I am desirous, that my Lady should be fully convinced of my Innocence. She at last came out of the Closet, dragging after her Mrs. *Meadows*, almost dead with the Fright. Is it you, said my Lady, as soon as she had Time to recollect her; and is this Creature impudent enough, to call you her Mother, and her Aunt? What is the Meaning, pray, of her claiming Kindred with you? And how long have you had this Daughter, or this Niece, if you had rather have her called so? Speak, thou infamous Creature, I insist upon knowing the Meaning of all this; and, if you will not tell me the Truth immediately, I shall rid my Hands of you at once.

Sir *Thomas* would fain have appeased her, and endeavoured to divert her from her Purpose, by turning the Conversation; but she desired him to hold his Tongue, calling him at the same Time, the most worthless, and basest Creature that she had ever met with. As to me, I was still on my Knees, very much astonished at what I had seen, and not daring to open my Mouth, expecting that my Mother would justify my Behaviour. But you may guess my Surprize, when Mrs. *Meadows*, intimidated by the Threats of her Lady, threw herself on her Knees, imploring her Compassion, and declaring that she was, in reality, neither my Mother, nor my Aunt; that she had, indeed, suffered herself to be corrupted by Sir *Thomas*, who had engaged her, by giving her some Papers (probably Copies of

of those I had, which he had wrote out, when left in his Hands by *Duncombe*) to make me believe that she was my Mother; that she had complied with this, in hopes of a great Reward from Sir *Thomas*, and this had induced her to discover it as a Secret to Mr. *Perry*, who had brought me to Town. She said, indeed, she was not privy to Sir *Thomas*'s ill Designs against me, and protested, in vain, to her Lady, that she did not believe he had any criminal ones; and even went so far as to appeal to me, for a Witness of the Truth of what she had been saying; but as she was now no longer my Mother, I did not trouble myself any farther about her.

My Lady was, however, very far from being convinced of her Innocence; mine was a little suspected, but in a short Time was cleared up to both our Satisfactions.

Well, said my Lady, turning herself towards me, you are going, I suppose, to confirm what she has said, and would endeavour to persuade me that you came here very innocently. Yes, Madam, replied I, with more Assurance than I could have hoped for, this Woman has deceived me, by pretending to be my Mother; Mr. *Perry*, I do not doubt, has been deceived by her too, since he was the Person that brought me up to Town. As to Sir *Thomas*'s and the Woman's Design, I am afraid they were none of the best. What do you dare, *Polly*, said Sir *Thomas*, interrupting me, do you dare to assert ----- Yes, I dare Sir, continued I, to assert this Truth, that ever since the Death of your Uncle, Colonel *Grimstone*, you have been continually tormenting me. What, said my Lady, are you the Girl
that

that Colonel *Grimstone* brought up, and whom Sir *Thomas* has so frequently mentioned? Yes, Madam, said I, a little abashed at what she had said. It is enough, said my Lady, I want no farther Information. Come, my Dear, said she, and follow me; let us leave this Monster to his own tormenting Conscience. As for you, continued she, addressing herself to Mrs. *Meadows*, I desire I may see you no more. I shall let your Friends know the Manner you have behaved in; it is very lucky for you that you have any, or, I should have punished you in the Manner you deserve.

I got up close to my Lady, Sir *Thomas* made some Attempts to pull me back, when my Lady, casting a Look of the utmost Indignation at him, took me under the Arm, and led me to her Coach, that

was waiting for her at the Door, and we drove to her House. Here I thanked her so tenderly, for the Danger she had delivered me from, that she seemed greatly affected, and made me tell her my Story, of which she had heard but an imperfect Account. I then told her that I had left some Cloaths, and Papers of Consequence at Mrs *Rigby's*, in her Neighbourhood; and, accordingly, she went with me there, and stood by while I packed up whatever belonged to me. I then went back with my Lady, who would have me sup with her, and allotted me an Apartment, which, she told me was at my Service as long as I pleased, making me, at the same Time, very generous Offers if I would come and live with her.

Notwithstanding the Obligations that her Goodness laid me under, yet the Remembrance

membrance of the weak Condition I had left Miss *Fanny* in at my Departure, and the Dangers that I imagined I should be continually expos'd to in *London*, and especially in the House of so thoughtless, and giddy a young Lady, as Lady *Sh--y* was, determined me to refuse the Offers that were made me. I desired her Leave to write to Mr. *Perry* the next Day ; and that I might invite Mrs. *Duncombe* to come and see me. She made no Objections, and desired I would employ her Servants on my Messages.

When Mrs. *Duncombe* received my Note, she was preparing to make me a Visit, having been informed of what had happened by Sir *Thomas*. I shall not enter into a Detail of a Conversation, which turned only upon Particulars already known ; and shall content myself with ob-

serving, that, although Sir *Thomas* had charged her to give me to understand, that the only Design he had in View, was to force me to the Match he had before offered to my Acceptance, she seemed a good deal affected at his continual teasing me ; and, scarce let slip a Day without coming to see me, during the short Stay I made in *London*. As to Mr. *Perry*, he was so ill of the Gout, that he could not stir abroad ; however, he wrote me Word, that he should be glad to see me at his House. Accordingly, I went in Company with Mrs. *Duncombe*, and found that he had already been informed by my Letter of the Manner in which he had been imposed on. He seemed to me almost inconsolable for having innocently had a Hand in laying a Snare for my Virtue. And, although he had been drawn in

in by his Good-nature to commit an Error which might have proved the Occasion of my Destruction ; he reproached himself for it as a Crime, and promised to repair it by his Increase of Affection, and Attachment to my Interest ; and admonished Mrs. *Duncombe* not to leave me during my Stay in *London*. As to what I said in relation to Lady *Drake*, he advised me not to see her, adding, as a Reason, that in all Probability, she was privy to her Husband's Designs.

I staid three Days longer in *London*, during which Time I only saw Mrs. *Duncombe* and her Husband. I reprimanded him for his Indiscretion, which, notwithstanding his Attachment to me, had continually proved prejudicial to my Interest. He acknowledged his Imprudence, in having put the Certificate into Sir *Thomas's*

mas's Hands, which had been of use to him, in laying a most detestable Snare for me ; but promised faithfully to be more cautious for the future ; and I continued to trust him, without repenting of it after.

I saw Lady *Sb----y* every Morning, who would not suffer me to be any where else than at her House. She seemed to like me better and better every Day, was continually making me repeat the several Incidents that had befallen me ; and when I had given her an Account of the several Stratagems that Sir *Thomas* had made use of to seduce me, and of the great Service the Remembrance of the Colonel's Instructions had proved to me, she seemed for a While wholly lost in Reflection, and, then as it were recollecting herself, How

happy

happy are you, my Dear, said she, in having had a good Education ! She seldom said this without Tears in her Eyes. I was the more affected, inasmuch, as I flattered myself, that I had revived in her Mind Sentiments of Virtue.

Lady *S---*y and I now seemed so well pleased with each other, that we were equally concerned at the Time of our Separation, which I was prepared for, by a Letter from Mr. *Perry*, in which he acquainted me, that he should send a Coach the next Day, to convey me to *Becconsfield*, when I could not help feeling a very pleasant Sensation, at the Hope of seeing Miss *Fanny* so soon. But Lady *S---*y was so much concerned, that it affected me with a great Degree of Tenderness.

We got to *Becconsfield* by Dinner the next Day, when the whole House seemed rejoiced

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rejoiced

rejoiced at my Arrival. I enquired immediately after Miss *Fanny*'s Health, but had the Misfortune to hear, that she had had a Relapse. I went then to Mrs. *Hampden*, who told me, she had expressed great Desire to see me, and was continually wishing that I would return into the Country.

Mrs. *Hampden*'s Account gave me so much Concern, that I was unable to make any Reply. The ardent Desire I had to see Miss *Fanny* was damped, through the Apprehensions that she might not be well enough to see me; I was in this inactive, and, as I may truly say, stupid Situation, when Word was brought me, that Miss *Fanny* desired my Company. Mrs. *Hampden* thought it proper to accompany me, in order to moderate the Transports we might otherwise have given way to. As

soon

soon as I came up to her, I threw myself into her Arms, and our mutual Tears were for a long Time the only Interpreters of our Hearts. Mrs. *Hampden* was afraid of the fatal Consequences that so affecting an Interview might be of to Miss *Fanny*, in her weak Situation, and therefore begged me to withdraw; I intreated a Permission to stay some Time longer, when the Physician, who was undoubtedly the best Judge what Effect my Presence would have on the sick Person, approved of my Earnestness, and went so far, as to give me Leave to set up with her that Night. If any Thing was capable of being an Addition to my Joy, it was undoubtedly this Permission, and I had this farther Comfort, that *Fanny* herself made no other Objection to it than what arose

arose from her Apprehensions of its being troublesome to me.

As soon as it was dark we were left to ourselves, and accordingly resumed our usual Tenderness. Oh! my dear *Polly*, said she, in a feeble Tone of Voice, what Uneasiness has your Absence occasioned! I should be glad, if you have no Objection, to hear what has happened since I had the Pleasure of seeing you. I complied immediately with her Request, and gave her an Account of every Thing that had befallen me since my Departure from *Becconsfield*, in which I was frequently interrupted by the Interjections she threw out at the Mention of the Names of Sir *Thomas*, and Mrs. *Meadows*, against whom she could not help expressing her Indignation in the strongest Terms. I shortened, as much as possible, the Recital of

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an Affair, with which I perceived she was so affected. I mentioned the Effect which it seemed to have had on Lady *Sb---y*, the great Civilities she had shewn me, and the Promise we had made of writing to each other. This Part of my Narrative appeased, in some Measure, Miss *Fanny*'s Resentment, and seemed to have put out of her Mind the rest of the Incidents. You see, my Dear, said she, how extensive the Influence of a good Example is ; if this Lady's Sentiments are as virtuous as by your Account they seem to be, it is to you that the Revival of them is principally owing, and you ought to consider it as the most valuable Reward for Innocency of Life, and Integrity of Heart. As I perceived that by this Time she grew composed, I laid hold of the Opportunity to intreat her to take some Rest ; and she

imagining

imagining that I stood in need of some myself, made not the least Objection to my Proposal.

The Physician, when he came in the Morning, found her so much altered for the better, that he could not help saying to Mrs. *Hampden*, who came in with him, pointing to me at the same Time, Here, Madam, is Miss *Fanny*'s most effectual Remedy. She has no farther Occasion for me. This Lady has done more in one Night, than all the Physick I could have given her in a Twelvemonth. You may be sure I was wonderfully pleased with this Account; and let it be sufficient to observe, that Miss *Fanny* grew better and better every Day.

It was now some Time since I had heard from Mr. *Drake*, and as I knew he was in the Army, it was an additional

Considera-

Consideration to make me uneasy. Miss *Fanny*, who, as I have said before, was my chief Confidant in this Affair, advised me to write to him, which I accordingly did. I related the whole Affair that had befallen me at *London*, knowing he was at too great a Distance for me to be apprehensive of his Resentment against his Brother; and besides, I had given him such solemn Assurances of dealing sincerely with him in every Thing that respected myself, that I should have thought myself to blame, if I had concealed it from him.

A few Days after I had sent this Letter, I received one from Lady *Sb--y*. I mention this Correspondence, to give my Readers an Account of a Connexion between us, that afterwards contributed to the happiest Incident of my Life; and, therefore,

therefore, it may not be amiss to give a little Description of her.

She was not much above twenty-five Years of Age, had been left a Widow, without any Children, at the Age of twenty-two, was originally a Merchant's Daughter, whom Lord *Sb--y* had taken a Liking to, on Account of her Fortune, for she could not be said to be handsome, being rather a fine, than a beautiful Woman. Her Understanding was lively, and her Manner of thinking on most Subjects, uncommonly delicate. Her Fault was the having rather too much Vivacity, since it sometimes evaporated into Giddiness, and frequently bordered on Levity. Her Foible was an earnest Desire to please every one; and, indeed, she would have deserved universal Approbation, could she have prevailed on herself, to shew less Attention to her own

Person,

Person, and more Steadiness in her Behaviour.

The Portrait I have here drawn of Lady *Sb---y* is not to be supposed to have been done on a slight Acquaintance with her. It is the Result of some Years Study of her Character, and of more Experience of the World than I was Mistress of in my younger Days. The Letters that I wrote in Answer to hers, required a much abler Head than mine to conduct them with Address; and therefore I applied to Miss *Fanny*, to overlook them. The discreet and wise Counsels that she gave in my Name, made me rise so in Lady *Sb---y*'s Esteem, that she afterwards put her greatest Confidence in me. I was the more pleased with this new Acquaintance, inasmuch as I found Lady *Drake* had quite forgot me, and indeed her Loss was amply

ply made up to me, by the Friendship of Lady *Sb--y*. I hope the Reader will excuse this Digression, which I thought necessary, and suffer me to resume the Thread of my Narration.

Since my Return from *London*, and Miss *Fanny*'s Recovery, I had spent four Months with a good deal of Tranquillity, much more than I had done ever since the Colonel's Death. I was now in the sixteenth Year of my Age, and was doubting with myself, whether I should stay any longer at *Becconsfield*, or comply with Lady *Sb--y*'s Invitation to come and live with her. I had, indeed, considered this Retirement as very necessary at the Time that I thought Mr. *Drake* seemed inconstant; and afterwards, I was apprehensive, that the low Circumstances of my pretended Mother would prove a Bar to

our

our Union. But now these Impediments no longer subsisted, I indulged my Imagination with the most flattering Hopes; and every Letter that I received from Mr. *Drake*, so thoroughly convinced me of his Sincerity and Affection, that I could not think it would be right in me to disappoint him--But of this, more hereafter.

I have already observed, that Lady *Drake* seemed to have forgot me, and, indeed, I had not heard from her since she called upon me at *Becconsfield*, in her Return from *Devonshire*. The only Accounts that had been given me of her, were conveyed by *Duncombe*, or his Wife. I knew that she had frequently spoke of me, as of a proud, conceited Girl, who had taken it into her Head to be in love with her Brother-in-law; the Consequence

quence of which would be either the Loss of my Reputation, or the making myself unhappy for Life. This being said by a Woman of known Integrity, and Uprightness of Behaviour, gave me a good deal of Concern; but this, however, was greatly alleviated by the Comfort afforded me by Mr. *Drake's* kind Letters, which convinced me, not only of his Sincerity, but that my Lady was as unjust in her Opinion of him, as she was indifferent, in respect to me. The Reader then may judge of the Surprize I was in, when being told, Mr. *Duncombe* wanted to speak with me, and that he had a Letter for me, from my Lady. The Melancholy which appeared settled in his Countenance, made me apprehensive of some terrible Misfortune; which was farther increased by his refusing to answer me any Questions,

ftions, intreating me only to read the Letter he had brought, as that, he said, would give me sufficient Information. I then opened the Letter, but with more Dread than Impatience, and found the Contents to be as follows.

My Dear POLLY,

“ I am almost overwhelmed with Grief. My Husband is at the Point of Death. He has ordered me to write to you ; and begs you will set out immediately on the Receipt of this, in the Coach he has sent for you. He longs earnestly to see you ; and the Alteration which his Sickness has produced in his Sentiments, will remove any Objection that you might otherwise have. I beg Leave to add my Intreaties to his, on this Occasion ; and wish for it, perhaps, with as much Earnestness as he

does. The Shortness of the Time, and the Extremity of the Case, will not permit me to say any more than that I am

Your's, sincerely,

E. DRAKE."

This Letter renewed in my Mind my former Sentiments of Tenderness for my Lady ; and the Condition I found Sir *Thomas* was now in, made me forget all the Complaints that I had to make against him. I immediately examined *Duncombe*, with respect to his Illness. Alas ! Madam, said he, almost drowned in Tears, Sir *Thomas*'s Danger is not the Effect of any natural Distemper, but the unhappy Consequence of an Affair he was concerned in with a Woman of Fashion, as it is supposed, for he himself has refused to say any Thing of the Matter. A few Nights

ago,

ago, he was brought home wounded, in three Places, one of which being through the Breast, is apprehended to be mortal. None of his Servants were at all privy to this Accident; he having sent them all home as soon as he came out of the Play-houſe. It was a Surgeon, into whose Hands ſome Strangers had put him, that conducted him home. As ſoon as he was ſensible of the Danger he was in, he enquired for you, and insisted on ſending his Coach for you immediately, and on my Lady's writing to intreat you to come. And, indeed, added *Duncombe*, I cannot help beſeeching you not to lose any Time, to give him the Comfort he stands in ſo much need of. As I was concerned for Sir *Thomas*'s Situation, I did not stay debating any longer with *Duncombe*, but immediately communicated the Contents

of my Lady's Letter to Miss *Fanny*, who advised me by all Means to comply with the Request. I made all the Haste I could, in packing up my Things ; and, after a tender Parting with Miss *Fanny*, got into the Coach, and in little more than three Hours, arrived at Sir *Thomas*'s.

I shall not attempt to describe the melancholy Situation in which I found my Lady, nor the Kindness with which she received me. It was a Renewal of Friendship, so tender and reciprocal, that it affected us equally. From her I learned Sir *Thomas*'s Danger ; and that he was now engaged with a couple of Lawyers, in making his Will ; that on the Morrow a very dangerous Operation was to be performed ; in short, Sir *Thomas*'s Situation was not at all concealed from my Lady, because, as they had no Children,

dren, it was probable she might have some Matters to settle; however, I found her absolutely incapable of taking any Advantage of her Husband's Weakness, but seemed wholly taken up in reflecting on the cruel Separation, which was soon to take place.

In a little while, Word was brought us, that the Lawyers were gone, and Sir *Thomas* had inquired if I was come? I found my Concern increase in proportion as the Time of my seeing him drew nigh. My Lady conducted me herself to her Husband's Apartment; and when I approached his Bed-side, Sir *Thomas* turned towards me, and immediately melted into Tears. He could only make Signs, that he desired to be left alone with me, and, accordingly, his Request was immediately complied with. I threw myself on my

Knees, and took hold of his Hand, which he stretched out for that Purpose, but was not able to speak. After some little Time, having collected the few scattered Spirits he had left, he said, What a melancholy Prospect does my present Situation afford you ! Tho', when you consider how continually I have persecuted you, instead of exciting your Pity it should move only your Contempt. No Sir, said I, in a Tone of Voice that was almost stifled with frequent Sighs, Nothing has ever been able to efface the Sentiments of Gratitude and Respect that I owe you. Indeed, Sir, I should be willing, if it were possible, to give up my own Life that yours might be preserved. God forbid you should, said he, in a more composed Manner; rise, I beseech you, and do not weep any more. I know, and feel that

all

all the Art they employ to keep me alive is wholly ineffectual: I have deserved, and do now wish for Death, since in what other Moment could I wait for it with less Apprehensions? I acknowledge the many Sins I have been guilty of, with Horror and Contrition, and I am now suffering the Punishment they have brought upon me. This, one would imagine, my dear *Polly*, is sufficient Matter for Confidence, and even for rejoicing. Why am I not at liberty to lay before you the present Situation of my Mind? My Strength is not sufficient, my Time is short; and I must therefore employ the few Moments I have left in telling you the Motives of my sending for you hither. I have offended and injured you, and for that I ask your Pardon. I detest my own Unworthiness, and ad-

mire your Virtues ; and if I was so unhappy as to survive my present Illness, I would use my utmost Endeavours to imitate them in my Practice. Besides the Favour of your Pardon, which I hope you will grant me, I have another to ask. I know the Attachment that my Brother has for you, and believe it to be such as is worthy of your Acceptance ; but, my dear *Polly*, your Virtue and Fortitude will never permit you to act unworthily of yourself, or contrary to the Designs of a Family of which he will soon be the Head and chief Support. 'Tis to you, my Dear, that I thought proper to open myself on this Head, more especially as I thought you capable of a Fortitude which I should perhaps have sought for in vain in my Brother.

Sir

Sir *Thomas* stopped here, as well to wait for my Answer as constrain'd to do it thro' his own extreme Weakness. I had still hold of his Hand, and was so deeply affected with the melancholy Situation he was in, that I was not able to utter a Word. I was a good deal moved with seeing him thus; but then the Subject he had been talking of was of so interesting a Nature that I did not dare to trust myself to make any Reply. I knew he expected a Kind of Promise from me, and I had not Courage enough to impose on myself so rigorous an Obligation. You make me no Answer, continued Sir *Thomas*, after having taken a little Breath; am I mikaken then in the Opinion I had formed of the Generosity of your Sentiments? No, that can never be. I will not lay before you the Obligations you are under to my Fa-

mily, nor will I mention what I have done this very Day in your Favour. Think only of this, that I am dying, and that my last Request is to have a Proof of your Esteem. These last Words melted me into Tears, and prevented me from preparing to make any Reply. No, Sir, said I, you shall not be mistaken, I will never suffer your Brother to disgrace himself by an Alliance which he may some Time or other have reason to be ashamed of. This I give you my Word of, and you may depend on my keeping it. It is enough, said Sir *Thomas*, squeezing my Hand gently ; forgive me the Injuries I have done you, and I shall die contented. I would fain have made an Answer ; but I could not bring out my Words, by reason of the Sighs and Tears that choaked up my Voice. Just at this

Time

Time somebody came into the Room. Go, said he, my Dear, and find out my Lady. Do not leave her at a Time in which she wants you so much; comfort her, I beseech you, and do not leave her desolate: I then took my Leave, and on going to my Lady found her almost sinking under the Weight of her Concern.

In a little Time after, Sir *Thomas* sent a Message, to desire to see her. When she returned, I found her more oppressed if possible than before. My Lady did not go to Bed all that Night, and I sat up with her to bear her Company. Sir *Thomas* was very composed in Mind; but so ill of his Wounds, that there was little Hope of Success in the Operation that was to be performed; and indeed this Night was his last, for on the Morrow he died while under the Hands of the Surgeons.

geons. This we were soon informed of by the Servants crying out. My Lady swooned away as soon as she heard it, and was so long in that Situation, that she had Time to be conveyed to an Aunt of hers before she came to herself.

I have but lightly touched on the Death of Sir *Thomas*, the Distress of his Widow, and the Resolution she took to retire into the Country, that I might the sooner pass on to Particulars in which I was more immediately concerned. Sir *Thomas* had made a Will the Day before his Death, by which he made his Brother sole Executor. He left some Legacies to his Servants, particularly a handsome Pension to *Duncombe*. Besides this, the Sum of five thousand Pounds he bequeathed to me. Another Circumstance in which I was concerned, was the Necessity I found my-

self under of accompanying *Lady Drake* into the Country. The Obligations I lay under to the Family, and the tender Friendship that was now revived between us, seemed to require it at my Hands; besides, Miss *Fanny*, to whom I imparted the whole Affair, advised me by all means not to leave her Ladyship in her distressful Situation. I will only add, that Notice was sent to Mr. *Drake* in *Germany* of his Brother's Death, desiring him to repair with all possible Speed to *London*. I also wrote to him myself; but strictly observed the Promise I had made to Sir *Thomas*, insomuch that I began my Letter with telling him, that as so great an Alteration had happened in his Circumstances, it was now high Time for him to think no more of me, but to place his Affections on some Lady worthy of the

Rank

Rank and Station he held in Life. This was not at all agreeable to the real Sentiments of my Heart; but although Sir *Thomas* had in a Manner extorted from me the Promise, yet I did not consider it as less binding for that Reason.

Sir *Thomas*'s Death was not the only Loss that my Lady had to lament; for we heard in a short Time after, that the Admiral, her Father-in law, was so shocked at the Accident which had robbed him of his Son, that it had brought on the old Gentleman's Death. Indeed he had been for some time very infirm, and but the Summer before had two or three very dangerous Attacks; and though this could not but be an additional Concern to my Lady, yet I believe I may truly say I was more deeply affected of the two, so inviolably was I attached to the Interest of her Brother.

This

This last Accident increased Mr. *Drake's* Busines ; he therefore appointed Mr. *Gambold*, a distant Relation, to be his Deputy, who accordingly managed Matters in such a Manner that the Hurry was soon over, and every material Thing settled. We were scarce got into the Country before I received a Letter from Lady *Sb---y*, wherein she took occasion to observe of how much Advantage Sir *Thomas*'s Death had been in strengthening her Resolutions, and ended by assuring me, that she envied Lady *Drake* the Happiness of my Company, as that was the greatest Pleasure she could have propos'd to herself. As soon as were a little settled, I had Time to give her an Answer, and with Lady *Drake's* Leave, I established a Correspondence with her during the whole Time that I staid in the Country. I also wrote

wrote frequently to Miss *Fanny*, to all which she used to return very punctual Answers. I received two from Mr. *Drake* by her Means, but did not venture to send any Reply. He was not then informed of the Alteration of his Circumstances, and as I had already wrote to him on that Subject, and did not doubt but as soon as he heard of it, he would set out for *England*, I thought it would be very imprudent to run any Hazard of my Letters missing him. Besides, the Pleasure I promised myself in seeing him, compensated in some Measure for my not having wrote to him, but this Hope was destroyed by the first Letter that my Lady and I received from him, in Answer to those we had wrote to him concerning his Brother's Death.

I have said, in the former Part of these Memoirs, that Sir *Thomas* made an Agreement

ment to purchase a Troop of Dragoons for his Brother. The Bargain had been made before he set out on his Travels ; so that he had not as yet joined the Regiment, which was now in *Flanders*, and going to take the Field. It was in this Situation that he answered my Letter, in which I had told him of what might be expected from him upon the Alteration of his Circumstances. He protested, that nothing was capable of making him alter his Sentiments with respect to myself ; and that, if he imagined I had the least Suspicion of the contrary, he would even quit his Duty to reproach me for my ill Opinion of him and his Sincerity.

I was too much attached to Mr. *Drake's* Interest to leave him in a Situation that might possibly be prejudicial to it ; and I avoided saying too much on the Constancy of my

Affec-

Affection, both on account of my Promise to Sir *Thomas*, and the Fear of giving Offence to the Family, which, I doubted not, would highly disapprove of an Alliance so unequal. But to return to the Account of our Retirement into the Country.

The Confidence Lady *Drake* was pleased to put in me, the Correspondence I kept up with Lady *Sb---y* and Miss *Fanny*, rendered a Solitude supportable which would otherwise have appeared tedious. I look'd indeed on my Separation from *Fanny* as a Sort of Exile ; and yet I must own that the extreme Tenderness and Attention which Lady *Drake* shewed for me, endear'd her to me considerably. The time that my Lady had proposed to spend in the Country was almost at an End. Her Affairs were pretty well settled ; and finding herself in possession of a Jointure of nine hundred

dred

dred a Year, she hired a House, and intreated me to live with her. I was extremely divided between the Obligations I laid under to her, and the Apprehensions of being separated from what I held most dear (excepting indeed Mr. *Drake*;) but at last Matters were settled to both our Satisfaction. Another Reason that I had for wishing this Retirement at an End, was, that my Lady had kept constantly at Home, which I had been in a manner obliged to comply with, that she might not be left alone: and yet, during this Interval, I had oftentimes had a Desire of paying a Visit to Lady *Sb--y*, who had frequently wrote to me; but the close Connexion that had subsisted between her and Sir *Thomas*, prevented her from coming to see me, as she could have wished. I had oftentimes mentioned her to Lady *Drake*, together with

the

the Reasons that interested me in her Behalf; and my Lady approved of the Motives of my Gratitude, and assured me, that she should be very ready to be admitted to her Acquaintance whenever there was an Opportunity.

The House that Lady *Drake* had lately hired, was not far off from Lady *Sb--y*, so that it was now in my power to visit her. We were both of us overjoyed at seeing each other, tho' she could not, she said, recollect the Beginning of our Acquaintance without taking Shame to herself for the Imprudence of her Behaviour, and of which I had been an Eye-witness. She assured me that my Innocence, and the Uprightness of my Example, had been of infinite Service to her in defending her from those Dangers, and preventing her from falling into those Snares she should

other-

otherwise have been exposed to. She owned that there was a Man of Quality, whose Affairs were a little embarrassed by an unhappy Accident, which had kept him abroad for the Space of fifteen Years, from whence he had not been returned many Months, who had taken such particular Notice of her, that she fancied he was in love with her. She confessed to me at the same time, that were he to make his Proposals she should not shew any Disinclination, not only on Account of his Person's being agreeable to her, but more especially as she considered the married State as a Kind of Defence against the libertine Principles and Practices of the present Age, into which, were she to continue a Widow, she might be in Danger of relapsing. I did not endeavour to dissuade my Lady from a Match, which was seemingly so advantageous.

Lord

Lord *N---*, for that was the Name of the Person she mentioned, was not then in Town. His Father's Death, which had happened while he was abroad, had left Matters in great Confusion; and he was at that time engaged in a Suit in Chancery, upon which great Part of his Estate was depending. I longed to see him extremely; but he was detained some time by Business in the Country; so that the only Judgment I could form of him was from the Letters that he wrote to Lady *Sh---*. His Character, as far as I could pick out from them, seemed to be that of a Man of a lively Understanding, and of great Integrity, but who was grown melancholy thro' a long Series of continued Misfortunes. About the End of *August* he came to Town.

But

But now I must beg Leave to observe, that I had received several Letters from Mr. *Drake*; the last of which informed me, that he had been promoted to the Rank of a Colonel of Horse. Nor was this the only happy News that I received, and which compensated in some measure for my Absence from my beloved *Fanny*. She informed me, that her Brother was now in *Holland*, settling his Affairs, which as soon as completed, he should return to Town, whither she likewise proposed coming to meet him. This, you may be sure, was Matter of extreme Joy to me, as I proposed to myself the Pleasure of being continually with her. Miss *Fanny* likewise informed me, that she should take upon her the Name of *Amburst*, on her coming to Town.

Two Days after I had received this

Letter, I sent *Duncombe* to fetch away my Things from *Beconsfield*, and gave him at the same time an Answer for Miss *Fanny*.

I must own, that from the affectionate Manner in which she had wrote to me of her Brother, whom she was sure, she said, I should like as soon as I saw him, and the Hope she expressed that, when we were once met, we should never again be separated; I began to be apprehensive that she intended him for my Husband, and tho' I took no Notice of this Suspicion to her, yet it gave me a good deal of Uneasiness.

Duncombe set out for *Beconsfield* the Day before Lord *N----* was to come to *London*. I had such an earnest Desire to see him, that, with Lady *Drake*'s Permission, I went to Lady *Sb--y*, in order to be present at his Arrival from the Country.

try. It was very late in the Evening before he came: I felt a sort of Uneasiness at seeing him.---His features bore so great a Resemblance to those of the Picture inclosed in the Bracelet, that it struck me with Surprize: But as I concluded to myself, that it was rather the Effect of my Imagination than of any real Resemblance, it made no farther Impression. There seemed an Air of settled Melancholy in his Countenance. As soon as the first Compliments had been paid, the very Sound of his Voice prejudiced me in his Favour; and I congratulated myself on the Advice I had given to Lady *Sb--y*, who, on presenting me to Lord *N--*, Here is a young Lady, Sir, said she, whose Deserts are greatly above her years. Ever since I have had the Pleasure of knowing her, I have thought myself happy in following her Advice. She has

given me a Piece lately, which includes you likewise in the Obligation; and I believe you will have no Reason to complain that I have made her my Confidant, since she pleaded in your Behalf, even before she knew you.

This Speech, you may imagine, put me into a great deal of Confusion, which was considerably increased by the Compliments I received from Lord *N--* on the Occasion. I was glad to take this Opportunity to make my Excuses, and retire to Lady *Drake's*.

The next Morning I received a Card from Lady *Sb--y*, inviting me to Dinner, to meet Lord *N--*. She desired me to come soon, that we might have an Opportunity of discoursing together, before my Lord came: I went as she desired me, but found her quite disconsolate. Alas, my dear Friend, said she, how sensibly

I am obliged to you for your kind punctuality! and, indeed, I never was in greater want of your Assistance and Advice. You saw Lord N--- Yesterday, when I do not doubt but you congratulated me, in your own Mind, on the happy Choice I had made; but, alas, my Dear, how disappointed are my Expectations! What, Madam, said I, has Lord N--- avowed a Change in his Sentiments? No, indeed, replied my Lady, I cannot doubt in the least of the Sincerity of his Affections; and what he told me Yesterday rather increased than diminished the Esteem I have for him. Upon my pressing my Lady to tell me the Cause of her Uneasiness, Could you believe it? said she, my Lord married in his Youth, without the Consent of his Parents. This Contract, however, he wishes could be made void; not only because it has given

Uneasiness to his Friends, but likewise as her Behaviour, he is informed, has been extremely blameable during his Absence abroad. He had indeed been told, that she was actually dead; but this Report is now contradicted, and, in his present uncertain Situation, he is at a loss what to do.

We continued talking in this Manner till Lord *N----* came in. As soon as Dinner was over, Lady *Sb--y*, having a great Curiosity to know my Lord's History, took us into a Closet, and, having ordered herself to be denied, desired my Lord to begin his Recital; which he immediately complied with, addressing himself to my Lady.

“ The Account, said he, you seem so desirous of, must rather be Matter of Concern to me, when I reflect that I myself, in a great measure, have been the Cause

Cause of all the Misfortunes that have befallen me. You may depend upon this, however, that I shall deal sincerely with you, and tell the whole Truth, notwithstanding such a Confession may sometimes turn out to my Disadvantage.

I was about twenty-two Years of Age when my Father bought me a Commission in the Guards. Soon after I happened to be in Company with a young Lady of exquisite Beauty, and lively Understanding; and, as my Father was a Man of Family and Fortune, I was very well received. Let it be sufficient to inform you, that after some time I grew deeply enamoured with the abovementioned Lady, and it was not long before we were privately married. I must own, to my Shame, that Matrimony did not produce in me the Effect that it ought. I was young and giddy, continually on

Parties of Pleasure ; and frequented very much the Assembly of Mrs. D----, whose House was the Resort of such People as myself, who had a good deal of time that lay upon their Hands. I used now and then to gallant it with her Daughter, which gave great Offence to a Gentleman of Fashion that was courting her at this very time. Notwithstanding the Affronts I continually put upon him, he bore it all with wonderful Moderation : And, now I come to consider coolly of my Behaviour, I wish I had imitated his Prudence and Discretion ; but I was then young, headstrong, impetuous in my Desires, and without any Experience. I considered the Gentleman's Mildness in the Light of Contempt ; and, in short, I behaved so ill to him at last, that Mrs. D--- forbid me the House. I looked upon this as the Effect of the Lover's Complaints ;

plaints ; and thinking myself obliged to be avenged of both, I wrote a Letter to Mrs. D---- in Terms of the highest Resentment, assuring her, at the same time, that it would not be long before I would take ample Vengeance for the Insult that had been put upon me.

I took care to have my Letter delivered at a proper time, namely, when the Lover was there ; and I had ordered the same Messenger to deliver him a Note, in which I desired him to meet me with Sword and Pistol the next Day. I had no sooner done this, but I applauded my own Bravery ; and accordingly I went immediately to the Play, where I imparted my Design to two or three of my Acquaintance, who were as giddy as myself, and who were so far from dissuading me from my Purpose, that they encouraged me in it.

We accordingly met the next Day, and having fired our Pistols without any Effect, we came to the Sword; when, after two or three Passes, I ran him thro' the Body. I went home immediately to make up my Affairs, and having settled them, as well as the Necessity of the Case would permit, I embarked for Holland, leaving my Wife with Child, and resolved to go under the feigned Name of *Amburst*."

I cannot forbear interrupting my Lord's Narrative, to observe, that I was greatly surprised when I found that this Lord *N----* was the feigned Mr. *Amburst*, whom *Fanny* had so frequently spoken to me of, and who was in Reality her Husband, as will shortly appear; tho' I shall wave entering into the Particulars of her Story, as the Reader is to remember, that these are my Memoirs, and not hers. At

At the same time it may well be imagined how surprised I was to hear what Lady *Sb--y* had told me, that my Lord was desirous of nulling the Contract, on account of his Wife's irregular Behaviour. All this seemed so contradictory to the virtuous Conduct of my dear Friend, that I could not help thinking but that my Lord had been imposed on. I had like to have betrayed my Surprize at the Mention of the Name of Amhurst; but a Servant luckily at this time coming in, to give my Lady an Account of a Message that had been sent her, gave me time to recollect myself: And as soon as he was gone away, my Lord continued his Story, which was in Effect no more than a Relation of his going to *Holland*, and of the frequent Accounts he had received of his Wife's Misbehaviour.

Altho' it was in my Power to have

cleared up this Matter to my Lord's Satisfaction, as I imagined, yet I thought it more adviseable to wait for fuller Information from *Fanny*, who was to come to Town, before I attempted to enter into Particulars. I was now capable of giving both my Lord and *Fanny*, whom I shall henceforth distinguish by the Title of Lady *N---*, since she was so in Fact, equal Degrees of Satisfaction, by clearing up the Reputation of an injured Wife, and giving an Account of a Husband supposed to have been dead. However, as I said before, I thought proper to defer intermeddling in the Affair, which gave way to a Discovery of an interesting Nature to myself. As I was sitting in the Room with Lady *Sb---**y* and Lord *N---*, and taking a Letter from my Pocket that I had received from Lady *N---*, my Bracelet dropt out of it. His Lordship having

ran

ran to pick it up, he first examined it with Attention, and then eagerly inquired how I came by it. I innocently told him the Method by which it came into my Possession. He paused for a while, and, as if recollecting himself, took hold of it again ; and touching a secret Spring in it, discovered the Picture. “ It is enough, said he : Then you have found a Father.” I was so startled at what he said, that for a while I was quite lost in Amazement : But recollecting the Manner in which the Likeness had at first struck me, I presently concluded that it must be so indeed. I immediately therefore kneeled down, and asked his Blessing. I omit the Particulars of a tender Conversation, which is rather to be felt than described.

Notwithstanding this Discovery, which at the same time that it awakened my Affection in finding *Fanny* to be
my

my Mother, and flattered my Vanity in knowing Lord *N----* to be my Father, yet I could not prevail on myself to relate the Particulars of Lady *N--'* Story, which was indeed the more unnecessary, as her last Letter had informed me that she should be in Town very speedily. As soon as I returned to Lady *Drake*, I was tempted to impart to her the interesting Discoveries that had been made, till I considered, that, in all Probability, I should act very imprudently in so doing; and that I had not only no Right to communicate a Secret, which in a great measure belonged to some one else, but that there was a Possibility that Lord *N--'* Affection for Lady *Sb--y*, and even Lady *N--'* Behaviour, tho' I thought it irreproachable, might throw Impediments in the way to the Completion of her Happiness, and that then its being known would

would be only Matter of Disgrace. I had therefore sufficient Command over myself, to tell Lady *Drake* only as much as I thought proper she should know; namely, the News of Lady *N---*'s coming to Town in a very short time. My Lady was pleased to offer me an Apartment in her House for her, till she could find out another that she liked better; and accordingly she made her this Offer on the next Day, in a Letter which she wrote for that Purpose, and pressed it so home, that it seemed very difficult for her to avoid accepting it. These previous Steps having been taken, I was now quite impatient for the time of her Arrival.

I went every Day to pay my Duty to my Father, who thought it proper to keep this Discovery a Secret as yet, and therefore permitted me to stay at Lady *Drake*'s.

At length the happy and much wished
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for Moment arrived ; and Lady *N*--- was set down at Lady *Drake*'s Door. If the new Drefs in which I saw her added nothing to the Charms of her Person, yet it seemed so natural to her, that she had never appeared so amiable in my Eyes. Lady *Drake* apparently shared the Joy which we felt at the Sight of each other, insomuch that, for some time, she did not perceive her Presence was a Restraint to us. At length, however, she left us to ourselves ; and I may say she left me in the utmost Perplexity, whether I should discover to her what Lord *N*--- had acquainted me with : However, I had sufficient Command over myself to defer till the next Day an Account, which would have interrupted those tender Marks of Endearment which we were now mutually bestowing upon each other.

On the Morrow, however, pretty early

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in the Morning, I went into her Apartment, and told her the whole ; when I was at a Loss to conclude, whether she was most affected with Tenderness towards me, (tho' that was an Incident she had long known herself, ever since her Discovery of the Picture in the Bracelet) or with Concern at the Suspicions that her Husband had of her Conduct. These she applied herself immediately to remove ; and thinking it the most effectual Method to do it rather by Letter than by Word of Mouth, she set herself to write an Account of the whole, and gave me the Letter to convey to my Lord. I obeyed her Commands with the utmost Exactness ; but he not being at home, I was obliged to defer delivering it till the next Day, not caring to intrust a Letter of such Consequence to the Hands of Servants. As soon as my Lord had read it, he seemed

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a good deal startled; and, every now and then, I perceived the Tears come in his Eyes. As to the latter Part of her Conduct, namely, while she was at Mrs. *Hampden's*, I assured him, that I had been a constant Eye-witness of it. He seemed pleased with the Earnestness which I shewed to vindicate her Character; but resuming at length his former Seriousness, he told me he should consider of it.

Three whole Days passed away without our hearing a Syllable: At length, on the fourth, Lady *N---* was surprised by a Visit from my Lord; in which, after having related the several Particulars that had befallen them, and cleared up the Objections which were seemingly in the Way, they were happily reconciled. This, you may be sure, was an Event not only of the highest Concern to me, but in which likewise I actually bore a Share;
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and it is impossible to conceive a Meeting of greater Affection and Tenderness, than what passed between us all at this time. We should perhaps have continued in this affecting Situation for a considerable Space of Time, had we not been interrupted by the coming of Lady *Drake*. This Incident, however seemingly improper, yet, in our present Circumstances, might be considered as of Service to us.

Such tender Scenes as these which I have just been mentioning, when continued too long, enervate and weaken the Mind, which they were only intended to sooth and soften.

In the Midst, however, of all this, there was a Circumstance that gave me some Uneasiness, occasioned by the Promise I had made to Sir *Thomas*; since, now that I was acknowledged by Parents of Family and Fortune, I had sufficient Reason to think

think that Mr. *Drake's* Family could no longer have any Objection to our Marriage.

I had received two Letters from him, in which he acquainted me with the Success of the Campaign; and I was terribly afraid that he would spend the Winter abroad, which would at least be a Delay to the Accomplishment of my Happiness, and which would be farther impeded by the ugly Promise beforementioned.

Lady *N---*, in due time, informed me of the Reasons why she had so long concealed her being my Mother; the principal of which was, that she had been already sufficiently afflicted, without thinking of adding to it, during her unhappy Retirement at *Beconsfield*: That the imparting the Secret to me, would have been no Matter of Comfort to her, but only Cause of

of Anxiety to me; and that therefore she could by no means bring herself to involve me in her Misfortunes, without any other Prospect than that of increasing our Misery; and besides, that this Secret was not wholly hers, and therefore my Lord's Consent was as requisite as hers.

I have just mentioned these Reasons, to obviate Objections which might arise in the Minds of my Readers, when they consider what a Length of Time it was that Lady *N---* knew herself to be my Mother, before she discovered it.

In a few Days after this Discovery we went into the Country, to my Father's Seat; and, at our Return to Town, called on Lady *Sh--y*, who seemed as much overjoyed at the Alteration that had taken place in my Circumstances as I was myself. My Father and Mother, who had taken the Opportunity of going into the

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Country to hear a more particular Account of each other's Story and of mine, all which tended the more plainly to a Discovery of my being their Daughter, were continually careffing me, and giving me undoubted Marks of their mutual Tenderness.

I longed for an Opportunity of discoursing in private with my Mother; for I had not yet had time to mention many things, that I heartily wished she might be made acquainted with. As soon as I had found an Opportunity of being alone with her, My dear Child, said she, embracing me tenderly, I have not forgot you: I have already acquainted your Father with the Sentiments you entertain in favour of Mr. *Drake*. He knows the Obligations you lay under to his Family, and will not therefore be any Hindrance to your reasonable Request. I have also

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informed Lady *Drake* of the Affair, who has the greatest Affection for you imaginable; and if your Happiness depended on her alone, you might look on it as already compleated; but she acquainted me, that Mr. *Gambold* (a great Friend of Mr. *Drake's*, whom he appointed to manage his Affairs during his Absence from *England*) had taken some Measures to marry him to a Lady of Fortune, and that the Match was greatly approved of by all his Relations; and that he has wrote to him to come over, that it may take place immediately.

You may easily imagine the Concern that this gave me; but my Mother was so far from being displeased at it, that she did all she could to revive my Hopes, and flatter my Expectations. She gave me to understand, that both my Family and Fortune were, at least, equal to Mr.

Drake's;

Drake's; that his Constancy, which she could not suppose to be at all lessened by his Absence, would make him disregard Steps which had been taken without his Knowledge. This quieted my Fears, and made my Mind more easy; but gave me at the same time an earnest Desire of putting Mr. *Drake's* Fidelity to a Trial, which I thought could not be more effectually done than by concealing from him for a time the Alteration that had taken place in my Circumstances. I therefore desired my Mother to request it as a Favour of all those who were entrusted with the Secret, not to discover it to Mr. *Drake* on his Return. This was accordingly done, and punctually complied with.

The next Day Lady *Sh---y* came to me pretty early, and told me, that she stood in need of my Advice, in an Affair of great

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Importance; no less than that of marrying my Mother's Brother, the Person on whose Account my Mother came to *London*. I thought proper, in return, to intrust her with a Secret, which she had hitherto been ignorant of. I therefore began with acquainting her with the Passion I had entertained for Mr. *Drake*; and she seemed transported with Joy, when I told her of the Innocence of our first Sentiments for each other. I then proceeded to shew her the Constancy of them, notwithstanding the long Absence that had intervened. She was wholly a Stranger both to Mr. *Drake*'s Person and Character; I therefore drew his Portrait as well as I was able, and expatiated upon the several Qualities that had recommended him to my Esteem: And just at the time that I was informing her of the sad Impediments that was going to be thrown in our Way,

by Mr. *Gambold*'s having found out a more proper Match for him, we heard a confused Noise of Voices without; and soon after Lady *Drake* came into the Room, and acquainted us, that her Brother-in-Law, Mr. *Drake*, was returned from abroad, and was just coming up Stairs. I was so overjoyed, but trembled so at the same time, that, forgetting myself and every one else, I made some ineffectual Attempts to go and meet him; but her Ladyship, perceiving my Intention, prevented me, alledging, that as neither Lord nor Lady *N----* were present, it was not proper I should shew myself; besides that, I knew the Request that had been made. She therefore desired I would step into the adjoining Closet: I complied, and Lady *Sb--y* consented to go with me.

Lady *Drake* had hardly time to order

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one of her Servants to go to Mr. *Gambold*, to beg the Favour of his Company, when I heard the Sound of that Voice which was so dear to me, and which so long an Absence could not make me mistaken in.

I shall not attempt to describe the Situation I was in, since it is beyond all Description. For some time I was unable to give any Attention to what was passing in the other Room; but recollecting myself after some time, I found that Lady *Drake* was telling him of the Steps that Mr. *Gambold* had taken for his Settlement. For, continued she, I can never think, Brother, that your Passion for Miss *Polly* would ever induce you to do any thing dishonourable, or unworthy of your Birth. You are sensible, I dare say, that your Friends would never give their Consent to your marrying a Girl neither of Family

nor Fortune. Alas! Madam, replyed he, I see every one is against me. Even you, whom I thought to be her most intimate Friend, at whose House I expected to have found her, even you have suffered yourself to consent and give Countenance to the ambitious Views of my Family; and you have, no doubt, approved of the Concealment, or perhaps of the intire Loss, of the only Person whom I do or can possibly love. However, let not my Relations flatter themselves, nor do you, Madam, imagine, that I will ever separate myself —— He had not time to make an End of what he was saying, when Lord and Lady *N*--- came in. Lady *Drake* introduced her Brother to them; and as she was, in all Probability, as impatient as myself to put an End to the Embarrassment in which the young Gentleman was reduced to, she opened the Closet-door:

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But while this was doing, my Mother presented herself to Mr. *Drake*, and said, Permit Miss *Fanny*, for whom you formerly had a Regard, to detain you a Moment. Miss *Fanny*! said he. He had scarce pronounced these Words, when in came Lady *Sb-y*, leading me by the Hand, trembling to such a Degree, that I could scarce support myself. Alas, my dear Sir, said I, come and acknowledge your *Polly*, that was once dear to you. *Polly*! said he, quite transported, Is it you, indeed? He felt so violent an Emotion, that it prevented him from saying any more. His Sister would fain have given him an Account of the Method by which I had discovered my Parents. No, my Dear, said he to me, I have never made the least Doubt of it. What Occasion is there, then, for saying what my Heart has told me a thousand times

times before. If I ever presumed to think myself worthy of you, it was my Affection alone that encouraged me in that Presumption. I am now in Sight of the most exalted Happiness: It is you only who can put me in Possession of it, and for which my whole Life shall be one continued Return of Sincerity and Affection.

Such generous Sentiments melted me into Tears; but Tears of Joy they were, to find myself so firmly beloved by him of whom I the most wished it. We continued some time in this pleasing Situation; nor should we have known any thing of the Arrival of Mr. Gambold, had not a Servant come in, and acquainted us with it. He seemed, for some time, quite lost in Astonishment; for he knew me again immediately, tho' he had not seen me since I had left the Colonel's. But if he

he was surprised, he was no less displeased, on seeing Mr. *Drake* kneeling before me, before such a numerous Company, and especially before Lady *Drake*. However, Mr. *Drake*, at my Desire, went up to him immediately, and made his Excuses for not having acquainted him sooner with his Return; and my Lady gave him an Account of the happy Discovery, which proved a Justification, she said, of Mr. *Drake's* Affection for me; and convinced her, that, let the Person be who she would that he had pitched upon for her Brother, it was scarcely possible that it could be a more advantageous Match.

Altho' Mr. *Gambold* seemed to have fortified himself against our Tears at first, yet at last he gave way to them, nor could he refrain himself. He entered as heartily into the Match, as he had before opposed it. Nay, he went so far as to take
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upon himself the drawing up of the Articles. Lady *Sb---y* also determined to give her Hand to Mr. *Amburst*, my Uncle.

In as little a while after as the Lawyers would permit, my Happiness was compleated. After my Marriage, I continued with my Sister-in Law, Lady *Drake*, 'till my Father and Mother had taken a House. Mr. *Drake* permitted me to take Mrs. *Duncombe* as my Woman, and he made her Husband his Gentleman out of Livery. He also sent for Mrs. *Fletcher* from *Powderham-castle*, to be my House-keeper. These several Steps, which were so agreeable to me, confirmed and strengthened the Pleasure that I felt; and as every Day was spent in studying what my Husband approved of, so each Day brought with it successive Delights.

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